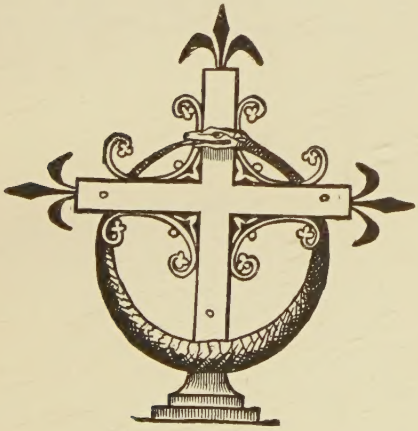
THE APOSTOLIC FATHERS



The Ancient and Modern Library of Theological Literature.

I. A.

THE APOSTOLIC FATHERS

THE EPISTLES OF SS. CLEMENT OF ROME AND BARNABAS AND THE SHEPHERD OF HERMAS

WITH A HISTORY OF
THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN THE FIRST CENTURY

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GENERAL PREFACE.

THE present volume of the *Ancient and Modern Library of Theological Literature* is one of a series intended to instruct the general reader in the knowledge of the early Fathers of the Christian Church. With this view we have placed as a background the learned and well-written history by the late Professor Burton, of the first century. It may thus be learned how the Church passed through the Apostolic era into that of the "Apostolic Fathers." These Fathers belong to the period between the close of the New Testament Canon and the days of St Irenæus (A.D. 160)—a period during which the record of the progress of the Church and of its heroes is very scanty. From the time of the great Bishop of Lyons onwards we have an abundant Church literature, and much fuller details in history than before. We see at that epoch how the Church had spread itself far and wide, but the seed had grown almost secretly. There were many writers during the interval whose works have perished, though, as we shall presently see, it is even now possible that some of them may yet be found buried away in the lumber rooms of Eastern monasteries.

The Apostolic Fathers thus belong to the intervening period we have named. The present volume contains the works of

three. The next will comprise the remainder. How far we may accept the genuineness of the Epistles, their claim to be the work of the writers whose names they bear, will be discussed in the Introduction to each as it comes. That they all belong to the period we have named, let the authors be whom they may, is an indisputable fact. The translation which is offered to the reader is that of Archbishop Wake, with the exception of some portions of the Epistles of Clement. That exception may as well be explained here instead of in the Introduction to St Clement.

The two Epistles ascribed to this Father are contained in a Manuscript now enshrined in the British Museum, the *Codex Alexandrinus*. This famous and priceless document, technically known as "Codex A," was presented by Cyril Lucar, Patriarch, first of Alexandria, then of Constantinople, to King Charles I. In 1757 it passed from the Royal Library to the Museum. That MS., written about the middle of the fifth century, is in four volumes, and contains the LXX. version of the Old Testament and the Greek New Testament. And immediately following the Book of Revelation are found the two Epistles of St Clement. This, until our own times, was the only copy of that Father known to exist. It has been many times printed, and it was from this that Archbishop Wake's translation was made. But a leaf from the first Epistle was missing (chapters 58 to 63), and all the latter portion of the second Epistle, though quotations from the missing parts were not infrequent in the writings of later Fathers. Thus the case stood until the year 1875. Then a remarkable discovery was made by Philotheos Bryennios, Metropolitan of Serræ in Ancient Macedonia. He found a complete copy of the two works in the Library of the Most Holy Sepulchre in Fanar of Constantinople. The date of the transcript was upon it, 1056. The

volume which contained the precious discovery had other works with it, among them one which we shall have in a subsequent volume, entitled, *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles.* He published the Clement at Constantinople in 1875, and thus for the first time the complete works were in the hands of the Christian world. As we have said, sentences from the recovered portion were already known through quotations. They are found here in their context, and no one questions the genuineness of the work. From Bryennios's reprint the missing portions have been translated by the present Editor and added in their place. They will be found at pp. 200-204, within square brackets. A splendid edition of these Epistles has been published by the Bishop of Durham, and his learned notes are full of light. It is to be hoped that his lordship will shortly publish a complete edition of the Apostolic Fathers. The value of such a work from his pen to the student of Church History cannot be over-estimated.

W. B.

INTRODUCTION.

History of the Christian Church in the First Century.

CHAPTER I.

CONDUCT AND PREACHING OF THE APOSTLES TO THE TIME OF THE DEATH OF STEPHEN; WITH THE CAUSES WHICH OPERATED TO PROMOTE THE SPREADING OF THE GOSPEL.

THE Kingdom of Christ, or the Church of Christ, may be said to date its beginning from the time when the Head of that Church and Kingdom rose in triumph from the grave. The Son of God, as He Himself informs us, had shared His Father's glory before the world was; and the scheme of redemption had been laid in the counsels of God, from the time of the promise being given, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head: but this gracious and merciful scheme had not been fully developed to mankind, till Jesus Christ appeared upon earth, and died upon the cross.

It had indeed pleased God, at sundry times and in divers manners, to acquaint the Jews with the coming of their Messiah; but the revelation had been made obscurely and partially: it was given to one nation only, out of the countless millions who inhabit the earth; and the Jews themselves had entirely mistaken the nature of that kingdom which their Messiah was to found. They overlooked or forgot what their prophets had told them, that He was to be despised and rejected of men; and they thought only of those glowing and glorious predictions, that kings were to bow down before Him,

and all nations were to do Him service. The prophecy of Daniel (though there might be doubts as to the precise application of its words) had marked with sufficient plainness the period when Christ was to appear; and when Augustus was Emperor of Rome, a general expectation was entertained, not only by the Jews, but by other nations also, that some great personage was shortly to show himself in the world. The Jews had strong reasons for cherishing such an expectation. If the sceptre had not actually departed from Judah, it had not been sufficient to preserve their independence, or to save them from the disgrace of being a conquered people. That this disgrace was shortly to be removed, and that their fetters were soon to be burst asunder, was the firm belief of a large proportion of the Jewish nation; and the name of their Messiah was coupled with ardent aspirations after liberty and conquest.

It was at this period, when the minds of men were more than usually excited, that the voice was heard of one crying in the wilderness, *Prepare ye the way of the Lord.* John the Baptist was the forerunner of the long-promised Messiah; but, instead of announcing Him to his countrymen as a king and a conqueror, he opposed himself at once to their strongest prejudices. They prided themselves upon being God's chosen people; and, as children of Abraham, without thinking of any other qualification, they considered their salvation to be certain. John the Baptist persuaded his followers to get rid of these notions. He taught them to repent of their sins; and, instead of trusting to outward ceremonies, or to the merit of their own works, to throw themselves upon the mercy of God, and to rest their hopes of heaven in a Saviour, who was shortly to appear. This was a great step gained in the cause of spiritual and vital religion. The disciples of the Baptist were brought to acknowledge that they had offended God, and that they had no means in themselves of obtaining reconciliation. It was thus that they were prepared for receiving the Gospel. John the Baptist made them feel the want of that atonement, which Jesus Christ not only announced but which He actually offered in His own person to God. And not only was John the forerunner of Christ during the short time that he preceded Him on earth, but even now the heart of every one, who is to receive the Gospel, must first be prepared by the

doctrines preached by John : he must repent of his sins, and he must have faith in that One who was mightier than John, who was then announced as about to appear, and who shortly did appear, to reconcile us to His Father, by dying on the cross.

John the Baptist proclaimed to the Jews, that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand; and though it is not probable that many of them understood the spiritual nature of the kingdom which was to be established, yet they would all know that he spoke of the Messiah; for the Kingdom of God, or the Kingdom of Heaven, were expressions which they had long been in the habit of using for the coming of Christ. When the Christ was actually come,—not, as the Jews expected, with the pomp and splendour of an earthly king, but in an obscure and humble station—He began His preaching with the same words which had been used by the Baptist, that *the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand.* When He sent out His twelve disciples to preach these glad tidings to the cities of Judæa, He told them to use the same words. From which we gather, that the Kingdom of God, or of Christ, was not actually come when Jesus was born into the world, nor even when He began His ministry. It was still only at hand. Jesus Christ did not come merely to deliver a moral law, nor to teach us, by His own example, how to live, and how to die. These were indeed the great objects of His appearing among us as a man; and the miracles which He worked, together with the spotless purity of His life, were intended to show that He was more than man : but Jesus Christ came into the world to atone for our sins, by dying on the cross. This was the great end and object of His coming; and Christ did not properly enter upon His kingdom till the great sacrifice was offered, and He had risen again from the dead. It was then that the Church of Christ began to be built. The foundation of it was laid in Christ crucified; and the members of it are all the believers in Christ's death, of every country and every age. It is this Church, of which, with the blessing of God, we may attempt to trace the history.

Jesus Christ had a great many followers while He was upon earth. Many, perhaps, sincerely believed Him to be the Messiah; but it is probable that very few understood the spiritual nature of the deliverance which He had purchased. The task of explaining this doctrine to the world was com-

mitted by Him to twelve men, or rather to eleven; for the traitor was gone to his own place: and when Jesus Christ was ascended into heaven, we have the spectacle before us of eleven Jews, without a leader, without education, money, rank, or influence, going forth to root out the religious opinions of all the nations of the earth, and to preach a new and strange doctrine, which was opposed to the prejudices and passions of mankind.

The doctrine itself may be explained in a few words. They were to preach faith in Christ crucified. Men were to be taught to repent of their sins, and to believe in Christ, trusting to His merits alone for pardon and salvation; and those who embraced this doctrine were admitted into the Christian covenant by baptism, as a token that they were cleansed from their sins, by faith in the death of Christ: upon which admission they received the gift of the Holy Ghost, enabling them to perform works well-pleasing to God, which they could not have done by their own strength. The commission to preach this doctrine, and to admit believers into the Christian covenant by baptism, was given by Christ, while He was upon earth, to the eleven apostles only; and one of their first acts, after His ascension, was to complete their original number of twelve, by the election of Matthias, who was known to them as having accompanied Jesus from the beginning of His ministry.

It is needless to observe that this small band of men, if we give them credit for the utmost unanimity and zeal, was wholly unequal to the conversion of the world. There is also reason to believe that, at this time, they had very imperfect insight into the doctrines which they were to preach; but their Master had promised them assistance which would carry them through every difficulty, and fit them for their superhuman labour. Accordingly, on the day of Pentecost which followed His ascension into heaven, He kept His promise by sending the Holy Ghost upon them, in a visible form, and with an effect which was immediately connected with their commission to preach the Gospel. The twelve apostles suddenly found themselves enabled to speak several languages which they had never learned; and the feast of Pentecost having caused the city to be filled, at this time, with foreign Jews, from every part of the world, there was an immediate

opportunity for the gift of tongues to be exercised by the apostles, and observed by the strangers.

We have thus, at the very outset of the Gospel, a convincing proof of its truth, and of its having come from God; for nothing but a miracle could enable men to converse in languages which they had never learned; and if the apostles, by means of the gift of tongues, propagated a false doctrine, it must follow that God worked a miracle to assist them in propagating a falsehood.

The effect of the miracle was such as might have been expected. There must have been some hundreds of persons in Jerusalem, who had not only witnessed the crucifixion of Jesus, but who were partly acquainted with His life and doctrines. The foreign Jews were probably strangers to His history; but they now heard it, for the first time, from men who proved their inspiration by evidence which could not be resisted. The apostles took advantage of the impression which this miracle had caused. They explained to the multitudes the great doctrines of the Gospel; and the result was, that on this, which was the first day of their preaching, no fewer than three thousand persons were baptized, professing themselves to be believers in Jesus Christ. These persons were not yet called Christians, nor do we read of their being known at present by any particular name; but they were distinguished by a spirit of brotherly love and charity, which might have been sufficient of itself to show, that their religion came from God.

It may here be convenient to take a hasty sketch of the political state of Judæa at the time of our Saviour's crucifixion. It was, in every sense of the term, a conquered country, though the Jews were very unwilling to allow that they were subject to any foreign dominion. Their independence, however, had been little more than nominal, ever since the taking of Jerusalem by Pompey, in the year 63 before the birth of Christ. This was the first transaction which brought them directly in contact with the overwhelming power of Rome. Herod the Great, who was not properly a Jew, but an Idumæan, though he dazzled his subjects by the splendour and magnificence of his reign, was little else than a vassal of the Empire; and he saw the policy of paying court to his masters, who, in return, allowed him to reign over a greater

extent of territory than had been held by any Jewish prince since the time of Solomon. Still there was a large party in the country which could not shut their eyes to the fact that Herod was a foreigner, and that the influence of foreigners kept him on his throne. To get rid of this influence by an open insurrection was hopeless; but Herod's connection with Rome, and his introduction of Roman manners among his subjects, kindled a flame, which was smothered for some years, or only broke out partially and at intervals, but which ended in the final ruin of that devoted people.

Upon the death of Herod the Great, which happened not long after the birth of Christ, the Romans put in execution the usual policy of conquerors, and made resistance still more difficult on the part of the conquered, by dividing their territory into parts. Judæa was given to one of the sons of Herod, and Galilee to another; but the still more decisive step had already been taken, of including Judæa in the general order which was issued by Augustus, that the whole empire should pay a tax. The money was not levied in Judæa till some years after the issuing of the edict. The opportunity chosen for this unpopular measure was on the deposition of Archelaus, who had held Judæa since the death of his father, and was removed from his government, to the great satisfaction of his subjects, about the year 8. The Romans now no longer disguised their conquest. They did not allow the Jews to retain even the shadow of national independence; but Judæa was either made an appendage to the presidentship of Syria, or was governed by an officer of its own, who bore the title of Procurator. One of these procurators was Pontius Pilate, who was appointed in the year 26, and held the office at the time of our Saviour's crucifixion. He continued to hold it till the year 36, when he was banished to Vienne in Gaul, and there is a tradition that he died by his own hand; but we know nothing of his directing any measures against the apostles, during the remaining years of his holding the government of Judæa.

It seems to have been the general policy of the Romans, not to interfere with the religious customs and prejudices of the Jews. The usual residence of the procurator was at Cæsarea, on the sea-coast, and he only went up to Jerusalem at the feast of the Passover, or on other extraordinary

occasions. With the exception of a Roman garrison, which occupied the tower of Antonia, and was always ready to overawe the inhabitants in case of a tumult, Jerusalem had, perhaps, less the appearance of a conquered city, when it was the capital of a Roman province, than when it was the residence of Herod, who called himself an independent sovereign. The high-priests still exercised considerable power, though the Romans had seen the expediency of taking the appointment to this office into their own hands, and of not allowing the same individual to hold it for a long time. It might be thought, that this foreign interference, in a matter of such high and sacred importance, would have been peculiarly vexatious to the Jews; but the competitors for the office, who were at this time numerous, were willing to be invested with the rank and dignity of the priesthood, even at the sacrifice of their national pride. The same feelings of ambition and jealousy inclined the high-priest, for the time being, to pay great court to the Roman authorities; and, so long as this good understanding was kept up between the two parties, the influence of the procurator was as full and complete as he could desire; though, to outward appearance, the management of affairs was in the hands of the high-priest.

Such was the state of things, when the apostles began their commission of preaching a new religion in Jerusalem. The narrative of the Evangelists will inform us, that the procurator had no wish to interfere in such questions, except at the instigation of the priests and the Sanhedrim. Even then, he took it up more as a matter of state policy, than of religion; and it was necessary to persuade him that Jesus was setting Himself up as a rival to the Emperor, before he would give any orders for His execution. As soon as he returned to Cæsarea, the field was left open for the Sanhedrim to take what steps it pleased for checking the apostles and their followers. There was always, however, need of some caution in any measures which were likely to excite a popular commotion. The turbulent character of the Jews, as well as their suppressed impatience under the yoke of conquest, were well known to the Romans, though they pretended not to be aware of it; but the troops which garrisoned the capital, had special orders to be on the watch against every appearance of riot or tumult. It thus became necessary for the high-priests to avoid, as much

as possible, any public disturbance in their plans against the apostles. The Romans had no objection to their practising any violence or cruelty against the followers of Jesus, so long as they did it quietly; and this will account, in some measure, for the Gospel making such rapid progress in Jerusalem, though the same persons continued in authority who had put Jesus publicly to death. The miracles worked by the apostles were evidences which could not be called in question; and the more general was the sensation which they caused among the people who witnessed them, the less easy was it for the high-priests to take any decisive steps.

It is not likely that the Gospel would be embraced at first by the rich and powerful among the Jews. These were the men who had excited the populace to demand the crucifixion of Jesus; and our Lord Himself appears to have foretold, that the poor would be most forward to listen to the glad tidings of salvation. Such was undoubtedly the case in the infancy of the Church; and the apostles did not forget, while they were nourishing the souls of their converts, to make provision also for supplying their bodily wants. Those believers who possessed any property, contributed part of it to form a common fund, out of which the poorer members of the community were relieved. It is a mistake to suppose that the first believers gave up the right to their own property, and, in the literal sense of the expression, maintained a community of goods. The Gospel taught them, what no other religion has taught so plainly and so powerfully—that they were to give an account to God of the use which they made of their worldly possessions, and that they were to look upon the poor as their brethren. They, therefore, abandoned the notion that God had given them the good things of this life for their own selfish enjoyment. They felt that they held them in trust for the benefit of others, as well as of themselves; and a part, at least, of their income, was to be devoted to the relief of those who would otherwise be in want.

Charity, in the fullest sense of the term, was the characteristic mark of the early Christians; but the bond which held them together, was faith in a common Saviour: and they immediately established the custom of meeting in each other's houses, to join in prayer to God, and to receive the bread and wine, in token of their belief in the death and resurrection of

Christ. There is abundant evidence that the Lord's Supper was celebrated frequently, if not daily, by the early Christians. It, in fact, formed a part of their ordinary meal; and scarcely a day passed in which the converts did not give this solemn and public attestation of their resting all their hopes in the death of their Redeemer.

Their numbers increased rapidly. The apostles worked stupendous miracles. Many of the converts were themselves endued with the same power of speaking new languages, or of doing extraordinary works; and, before many weeks had elapsed, not only were some priests and Levites numbered among the converts at Jerusalem, but the new doctrines had begun to spread through the neighbouring towns.

The attention of the Jewish authorities was soon attracted to the apostles and their followers. Several causes combined at this time to raise among the Jews an opposition to the Gospel. The zealous patriots, whose numbers were increasing, and who were becoming more impatient of Roman domination, had indulged a hope that Jesus would have raised the standard of the Messiah, and headed an insurrection against the conquerors. Instead of seconding their wishes, He always inculcated obedience to the government, and was put to a disgraceful death. The followers, therefore, of such a man, if they were not too despicable to obtain any notice, were looked upon as enemies to the liberty of their country. All those persons who were immoral in their conduct, but, at the same time, pretenders to sanctity, could not fail to be offended at the severe reproofs which they received from Jesus and His disciples. The notion that righteousness was to be gained by an outward observance of legal ceremonies, was utterly destroyed by the preaching of the Gospel. The kingdom of heaven was said, by the new teachers, to be thrown open to all persons who repented of their sins and believed in Christ: and hence every one who was self-righteous, every one who boasted of his privileges as a descendant of Abraham, felt it to be a duty to persecute the disciples of Jesus.

It was not, however, so easy a matter to suppress the new doctrines. The people looked on with amazement, and even with terror, while the apostles were working their miracles; and when they preached in the Temple there was no want of multitudes who listened eagerly to their words. Every day

increased their popularity ; and the authorities had not courage to act openly against them. If they succeeded in arresting one or more of them privately, their prison doors were miraculously thrown open ; and instead of being brought to answer their charge or receive their sentence, they returned to disseminate their doctrines more publicly and boldly than before. If some false disciples insinuated themselves into their company, the immediate detection of their hypocrisy exhibited still more plainly the superhuman power of the apostles. Thus Ananias and Sapphira pretended to bring the whole of the sum which they had received for the sale of some land, and offered it as their contribution to the common fund. The apostles knew that the statement was false ; and while the falsehood was hanging on their lips they both fell dead. The judgment may appear severe, but we may be sure that it was necessary. The sufferers had, in the first instance, been seeking for applause under the mask of charity, and then thought to impose upon the very persons whose miracles had been the cause of their own conversion. The times did not allow of such cases being multiplied, or escaping with impunity. Treachery from within might have made it impossible to resist the attacks which were threatening from without ; and the death of Ananias and Sapphira must have had a powerful effect upon wavering and worldly minds, which were already half-convinced, but were still only half-resolved to lay down their pleasures and their vices at the foot of the Cross. Dissensions among the rulers themselves contributed in some measure to save the apostles from molestation. The Pharisees and Sadducees looked upon each other with feelings of jealousy and hatred. The Pharisees were most numerous, and reckoned among their sect the most learned expounders of the Law ; but many of the rich and higher orders were Sadducees. Both parties agreed in persecuting the followers of Jesus ; but the Sadducees were still opposed to them, for maintaining so forcibly the doctrine of a Resurrection. The Pharisees were equally willing to see the apostles imprisoned, or even put to death ; but they would not consent that they should suffer for preaching the Resurrection of the dead ; and thus the Gospel made more progress, because its enemies could not agree among themselves as to the means of suppressing it. The high priest and his family happened at this time

to be Sadducees; but Gamaliel, who was the most learned man of his day, and whose opinion had most weight in the council, was a Pharisee.

Jesus Christ had not Himself left any directions for governing His Church; none, at least, are recorded in the books of the New Testament. During His abode on earth, He chose out twelve men from among His followers, to whom He gave a special commission to preach the Gospel, not only in Judæa, but throughout the world.

He also, on one occasion, sent out seventy other disciples, to declare to their countrymen, that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand. But they could only announce it as at hand. It is plain, that when the kingdom was begun, and believers were to be gathered into it, He intended the keys of this kingdom to be given to the apostles. It was upon them that the Church was to be built. The commission of preaching and baptizing was given solemnly to them on the last occasion of their seeing their Master upon earth. Their first recorded act, after His ascension, was to supply the deficiency which had been caused in their number by the treachery and death of Judas. All which seems to point out the twelve apostles as a distinct order from the rest of the believers, and to show that the management of the new community was intended, by their Master, to be committed to their hands.

Their first office, therefore, was to announce the offer of salvation. When any persons accepted it, it was for the apostles to admit them, by baptism, to the privileges of the new covenant; and, if they had had nothing else to do but to baptize, their time would have been fully occupied. They had also to attend the different places where prayer-meetings were held, and where the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered. When the fame of their miracles had spread, they were constantly called upon to exercise their preternatural power in healing the sick: and when we learn that the converts amounted to many thousands, within a few days after the descent of the Holy Ghost, it is scarcely possible to conceive that the apostles could have met these various demands upon their time without calling in some assistance. The public fund which had been raised for the relief of the poor required much time, as well as discretion, in the distribution of it; and the apostles soon found themselves obliged to commit this

part of their office to other hands. The business was sufficiently laborious to occupy seven men, who were chosen, in the first instance, by the body of believers, and were then ordained for their special ministry, by having the hands of the apostles laid upon them. They were called Deacons, from a Greek term, which implies ministration, or service; and their first duty was to attend to the wants of the poor; but they also assisted the apostles in other ways, such as explaining the doctrines of the Gospel, and baptizing the new converts. In one point, however, there was a marked difference between them and the apostles. When they had persuaded men to believe, they could admit them into the Christian covenant by baptism; but they had not the power of imparting to them those extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, which it was the privilege of the apostles only to confer, by laying on their hands.

This division of labour, which was caused by the appointment of the deacons, not only gave the apostles much more time for preaching the Gospel, but their appointment is itself a proof, that, at this time, the believers in Christ were not much molested by the Jewish authorities. The seasons most favourable for promoting a persecution, were when the great festivals came round, such as the Passover, Pentecost, or the Feast of Tabernacles. On these occasions Jerusalem was filled with thousands of Jews from different parts of the world. Many of these strangers had never heard of the name of Jesus before their arrival in Judæa. So long a journey was likely to be undertaken by those who were most zealously attached to the law. Their previous notions of the Messiah would lead them to expect a triumphant conqueror, and an earthly kingdom: so that, when they reached the land of their fathers, with their minds already worked upon by religious excitement, they would easily be persuaded to look with horror upon men who preached against the law, and against all the privileges which the Jews supposed to belong to their Temple and nation. The apostles and their followers were represented as preaching these doctrines; and, though the charge was very far from being true, yet the foreign Jews would hear them maintaining that Jesus was far greater than Moses, and that righteousness was not to be obtained by the law.

It was at one of these festivals, perhaps the Feast of Tabernacles, which followed the Ascension, that Stephen, who was

one of the most active of the seven deacons, was stoned to death. He was drawn into dispute by some of the foreign Jews; and when they found him superior in argument, they raised against him the cry, that he had blasphemed Moses and the law. Being dragged to trial upon this hasty charge, his sentence was as speedily passed, as it was executed. He has always been called the first Christian martyr; and, like his heavenly Master, to whom he offered a prayer, as his soul was departing from his body, his last and dying words were uttered in behalf of his murderers.

This was the first open act of violence committed against the Christians since the crucifixion of the Founder of their religion: but even this is to be looked upon rather as an act of popular frenzy and excitement, than as a systematic attack authorised by the government. There is no evidence of the Roman authorities having been called upon, in any way, to interfere; and so long as there was no riot or public disturbance, they gave the Sanhedrim full permission to decide and to act in all cases which concerned religion. The affair of Stephen was exclusively of this nature; and though we cannot but view with abhorrence the monstrous iniquity of his sentence, it may have been strictly legal, according to the practice of the nation and of the times. The trial of the martyr took place in the Temple: his death was by stoning, as the law required in case of blasphemy; and the first stones were thrown by the witnesses. All which seems to show that the forms of law were closely attended to, even in such a violent and hasty proceeding. The haste was, perhaps, necessary, that the whole might be over before the Romans could interfere, which they might be likely to have done, if a disturbance had been raised within the city: and it was probably from the same cause that the prisoner was hurried to his execution without the walls: such a spot was fitter for the scene of cruelty than the area of the Temple, or the streets, which were now crowded, in consequence of the festival; and when the work of death was complete, which need not have required many minutes, there was nothing to excite the suspicion or vigilance of the Romans. No opposition seems to have been offered to the friends of the deceased carrying off his body, which was committed to the grave with the usual accompaniments of lamentation and mourning.

It has been doubted whether the Jews at this period possessed the power of inflicting capital punishment; but the history of Stephen appears to prove that they did. His execution, as has been observed, was precipitate, but we cannot suppose that it was altogether illegal, or that the Romans had taken away from the Jewish authorities the exercise of such a power. Offences against the procurator, or which could be construed into acts of resistance to the laws of the empire, would, of course, be tried before Roman tribunals, or in courts where other laws than those of Moses were recognised: but it is demonstrable that the laws of Moses were still in force, in matters not merely of a civil, but of a criminal nature; and the Romans were too politic to irritate a conquered people by depriving them at once of all their ancient usages. No attempt had hitherto been made (or at least, by no regular act of the government) to force the Jews to adopt any religious rights of the heathen; and questions of religion were left entirely to the decision of Jewish tribunals. If Stephen had been taken before a Roman officer, he would have dismissed the case without even giving it a hearing; or, if he had listened to the complaint, he would have pronounced it to be one which had no relation to the laws of Rome, and in which he was not called upon to interfere.

It can hardly be denied that this is a favourable circumstance for the Gospel at the time of its first promulgation. Its earliest enemies were the Jews, whose bitterness and malevolence could hardly have been exceeded: but their power to injure was not equal to their will. Had they shown their hatred of the Christians by a public persecution of them on an extensive scale, the Romans would probably have thought it necessary to quell the disturbance: and thus the new religion made a rapid progress in the city which was the head-quarters of its deadliest enemies. But, if the Romans had joined in opposing it, the contest must have appeared hopeless. Our faith may tell us, that even then the victory would have been on the side of truth, and God Himself would have interposed to defeat the adversary; but, humanly speaking, the Gospel would have had much less chance of making its way, if the power of Rome had been arrayed against it in its infancy. As we pursue the history, we shall find the whole strength of the empire put forth to crush the new religion; but the tree had

then taken deep root, and though its leaves and branches were shaken and scattered by the tempest, it stood firm amidst the shock, and continued to *take root downwards, and to bear fruit upwards.* The fire and sword did their work; but they began too late to do it to their uttermost. Had the Gospel been preached while the sceptre of Judah was still grasped by a firm and independent hand, it might have crushed the rising sect before it had attracted many followers; or, had an edict from Rome prohibited the apostles from speaking in the name of Jesus, the mandate must have been obeyed; but Christ having appeared at this particular time, when the Jews, as a nation, retained but a remnant of power, and when their Roman conquerors did not care to trouble themselves with a religion which they affected to despise, the result was highly favourable to the progress of the Gospel. The Christians were for a long time considered by the heathen to be merely a Jewish sect; and the toleration, or the contempt (for either expression might be used), which protected the Jews in the exercise of their religion, afforded also the same protection to the Christians. The Jews would have exterminated Christianity, but had not the power: and the Romans were in some measure the unintentional protectors of the very religion which they afterwards tried so perseveringly, but so fruitlessly, to destroy. So true it is that *God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty.*

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CHAPTER II.

FIRST PERSECUTION OF THE CHRISTIANS—CONVERSION OF SAUL—INTRODUCTION OF THE GOSPEL INTO SAMARIA; WITH AN ACCOUNT OF SIMON MAGUS AND THE GNOSTICS.

THE death of Stephen was only the beginning of cruelties. If the popularity of the apostles had before protected them, the feeling of the people towards them had now greatly changed. It is possible that the calumny was generally believed, that the new doctrine was subversive of the Temple and

the law. It was at least believed by the foreign Jews, who had filled every part of the city: and the original hatred of the chief priests and scribes would burst out with more violence, from having been for a time suppressed. The persecution which ensued called forth the talents and activity of a young man, who now attracts our attention for the first time, and who, if human causes had been suffered to operate, might appear to have been born for the extirpation of Christianity. This man was Saul. He was a native of Tarsus, in Cilicia; and his father, who was a Pharisee, had given him a learned education. The schools of his native city, which were at this time in great repute, would have instructed him in heathen literature; but Saul was sent to Jerusalem, to finish his studies under Gamaliel, who has already been mentioned as the most celebrated expounder of the Jewish law. The young Pharisee united great talents with a hasty disposition, and passions which could easily be excited; but his sense of religion had taught him to restrain them, except when he thought they could be devoted to the service of God; and, in an age which was peculiarly marked by wickedness and hypocrisy, his moral character was unimpeached and unimpeachable.

To a mind constituted and trained like that of Saul, the doctrines preached by the apostles would appear peculiarly heretical. As a Pharisee, he would approve of their asserting a future resurrection; but when they proved it by referring to a Man who had been crucified and come to life again, he would only put them down for enthusiasts or impostors. When he heard that this same Man was said to be the Messiah; that He and His followers denied that righteousness could come by the law; that circumcision, and the whole service of the Temple, were denounced as useless, without faith in an atonement, which made all other sacrifices superfluous; —when the new doctrines were thus represented, the zeal of Saul at once pointed out to him that it was his duty to resist them with all his might. He appears to have come to Jerusalem, with some others of his countrymen, to attend the festival, and to have taken an active part in the attack upon Stephen. The dispute was at first carried on in words; and the foreign Jews (among whom we may recognise Saul and the Cilicians), undertook to refute the doctrines which had made such progress among the native inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Saul was probably a man of much more learning than Stephen; but we may infer that the latter had the advantage in argument, when we find his opponents having recourse to violence and outrage. The zeal of Saul carried him still further than this; and the first Christian blood which was shed by the hands of persecutors, is to be laid, in part, to the charge of Saul, who at least encouraged the death of Stephen, if he did not himself lift a stone against him, and was present when the spirit of the martyr returned to God who gave it.

The high-priest and his council were too happy to avail themselves of such an instrument for destroying the effect which had been caused by the miracles of the apostles. The death of Stephen was followed by similar outrages against many other persons who were believers in Jesus, and who were now imprisoned or killed, if they did not save themselves by flying from the city. The apostles maintained their ground; but the deacons, and most of their adherents, sought an asylum elsewhere. Saul was among the most active instruments in this first persecution of the Christian Church; and when he was about to leave Jerusalem, at the close of the festival, he made a proposal to the high-priests for carrying on the same system of attack in other places.

His journeys from Tarsus to Jerusalem were likely to make him acquainted with the large and populous city of Damascus; but whether he had lately visited it himself, or whether he had his information from the Jews who attended the festival, he had heard that the new doctrines were professed by some persons of both sexes in Damascus. This city was now in the military possession of Aretas, a petty prince of Arabia, whose daughter had been married to Herod Antipas, one of the sons of Herod the Great; but when Herod took his brother Philip's wife to live with him, the daughter of Aretas resented the insult by leaving him, and returning to her father. Aretas immediately made war upon his son-in-law, whom he defeated in a pitched battle; and the Romans neglecting at first to take up the quarrel, he held possession for some years of an extended territory, and among the other places, he put a garrison into Damascus. His fear of the Romans would make him likely to court the favour of the Jews, who were very numerous in that city; and Saul could hardly have found a place where he was less likely to be checked in his attacks upon the Christians.

Damascus is at a distance of 150 miles from Jerusalem; and Saul's journey thither is the first intimation which we have had of the Gospel having spread so far. There is, however, great reason to believe, that, even at this early period, it had been carried into several countries. Of the three thousand who were baptized on the day of Pentecost, some, if not many, had been foreign Jews; and the new doctrines would be carried by their means into distant parts of the world within a few weeks after their first promulgation. There is, therefore, nothing extraordinary in Saul being aware that Christians were to be found at Damascus; and, having provided himself with letters from the high-priest at Jerusalem, addressed to the Jewish authorities, he set out, with the intention of speedily returning with a train of Christian prisoners. God, however, had decided otherwise. Saul the persecutor was to become the chief preacher of the religion which he had opposed; and to Him who had decreed this change it was equally easy to accomplish it.

There is no need to dwell upon the miraculous circumstances of the conversion of Saul. It is sufficient to mention that Jesus Himself appeared to him by the way, and revealed to him His future intentions concerning him. It was even added that he was to preach the religion of Jesus to the Gentiles, which would, perhaps, have been more revolting to Saul's previous sentiments than his own adoption of the religion which he had persecuted. Nothing, however, short of a special miracle would have been likely to persuade any Jew that salvation was to be extended to the Gentiles; and when this communication was made to Saul, we may say with truth that he was more enlightened on this point at the first moment of his conversion than all the apostles who had had so much longer time for understanding the Gospel. Saul was blinded by the vision, and did not recover his sight till he had been three days in Damascus. He was then admitted into the Christian covenant by baptism; and either on account of the prejudice which still existed against him, or with a view to receiving more full revelations concerning the doctrines which he was to preach, he retired for the present into Arabia.

In the meantime the persecution had almost, if not entirely, ceased in Jerusalem. While the city was filled with foreign

Jews, who attended the festival, the high priests found no want of instruments for executing their designs against the Christians. The houses in which these persons met for the purpose of prayer were easily known, and many innocent victims were thus surprised in the act of devotion, and sentenced to punishments, more or less severe, on the charge of conspiring to subvert the laws of Moses. The crowded state of the city, which on such occasions often led to riots in the streets, would allow these acts of cruelty and injustice to pass without any special notice from the Roman garrison; and while several Christians were put to death, many others found it necessary to escape a similar fate by leaving Jerusalem. The colleagues of Stephen in the office of deacon were likely to be particular objects of hatred to the persecuting party. They appear all to have sought safety in flight; and thus the very means which had been taken to extirpate the Gospel, conveyed it into a country which would have been least likely to receive it from Jewish teachers. This was Samaria, whose inhabitants still cherished their ancient hostility to the Jews; and while the persons who attended the festivals, had carried Christianity into countries far more distant, Samaria, which was so near, was likely to hear nothing concerning it.

It will be remembered that Samaria had for many centuries been inhabited by a mixed race of people, whose religious worship was corrupted by Eastern superstitions, but who still professed to acknowledge the one true God, who was the God of Abraham, and who had revealed Himself by Moses. It is known that when the ten tribes were carried captive to Assyria, the conquerors sent a numerous colony of strangers to occupy the country; and these men brought with them different forms of idolatry and superstition. There is, however, reason to think that a greater number of Israelites continued in the country than has been generally supposed.

The inhabitants of Samaria continued to speak the same language which had been spoken by all the twelve tribes until the time of the Babylonish captivity, which is the more remarkable, because the Jews who returned to Jerusalem from Babylon, had laid aside their original Hebrew, and had learnt from their conquerors to speak Chaldee. Very few of them could understand their Scriptures in the language in which they were written; and though copies of them were still multi-

plied for the use of the synagogues, the Hebrew words were written in Chaldee letters; whereas the Samaritans still continued to use the same letters which had always belonged to the Hebrew alphabet.

The Bible informs us of the quarrel which arose between the Samaritans and the Jews, when the latter began to rebuild Jerusalem upon their return from captivity; and we know that the same national antipathy continued in full force at the time of our Saviour appearing upon earth. There was, however, little or no difference between them as to the object of their worship. The God of the Jews was worshipped in Samaria, though the Samaritans denied that there was any local or peculiar sanctity in the Temple at Jerusalem. They held that He might be worshipped on Mount Gerizim as effectually as on Mount Sion; in which opinion they may be said to have come near, though without being conscious of it, to one part of that *law of liberty* which was established by the Gospel.

Another point in which they differed from the Jews was their rejection of all the books of the Scriptures except the five which were written by Moses; but these were regarded by the Samaritans with almost the same reverence which was paid to them by the Jews. It must have been principally from these books of Moses that they learnt to entertain an expectation of the coming of the Messiah; but the fact is unquestionable, that the notion which had for some time been so prevalent in Judea, that the promised Deliverer was about to make His appearance, was also current in Samaria.

In some respects, therefore, we might say, that the Samaritans were less indisposed than the Jews to receive the Gospel. One of the great stumbling-blocks to the Jews, was the admission of any people beside themselves to the glories of the Messiah's kingdom; and, according to their own narrow views, it was as impossible for the Samaritans to partake of these privileges, as the Gentiles. It was probably on account of this prejudice, that when our Saviour, during the period of His own ministry, sent out His disciples to preach the Gospel, He told them not to enter into any city of the Samaritans. He knew that the feelings of the two nations towards each other were as yet too hostile to admit of this friendly intercourse; but when He was about to return to heaven, and was

predicting to the twelve apostles the final success of their labours, He told them plainly that they were to preach the Gospel in Samaria. He added, that they were to carry it also to the uttermost parts of the earth; and it is probable that, at that time, the apostles were as much surprised with the one prediction as with the other. The admission of Samaritans to the Messiah's kingdom must have appeared strange even to the apostles; and this first step in the extension of the Gospel was owing to the accidental circumstance of so many Christians flying from Jerusalem after the death of Stephen.

Philip, one of the deacons, took refuge in Samaria, and announced to the inhabitants that the Messiah was already come, in the person of Jesus. The working of miracles was by no means confined to the apostles, but many of those upon whom they laid their hands received and exercised the same power; and we need not wonder that Philip gained many converts in Samaria in a short time, when we remember that his preaching was confirmed by the evidence of miracles.

One of his hearers was a person who holds a conspicuous place in Ecclesiastical History. His name was Simon, and from the success with which he practised the popular art of magical delusions, he acquired the surname of *Magus*, or the Sorcerer. He is said, by many early writers, to have been the founder of the Gnostics, a new sect of philosophers, who were now rising into notice, and who had their name from laying claim to a more full and perfect *knowledge* of God. These opinions seem to have been most prevalent in Alexandria, and to have been a compound of heathen philosophy, the corrupted religion of the Jews, and the Eastern notion of two principles, one of good, the other of evil. They believed matter to have existed from all eternity; and they accounted for the origin of evil, without making God the author of it, by supposing it to reside in matter. They also imagined, that several generations of beings had proceeded, in regular succession, from God, and that one of the latest of them created the world, without the knowledge of God. This explained why the world contained such a mass of misery and evil; and the Gnostics boasted that they were able to escape from this evil by their superior knowledge of God. But when it is said that Simon Magus was the founder of the Gnostics, it is meant that he was the first person who introduced the name of Christ into this absurd and

irrational system. For, as soon as Christianity became known by the preaching of the apostles, the Gnostics laid hold of as much of it as suited their purpose, by giving out that Christ was one of the beings who had proceeded from God, and who was sent into the world to free it from the tyranny of evil; thus confirming, though under a heap of errors, the two great doctrines of the Gospel, that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, and that He came into the world to save us from our sins.

Simon Magus had an opportunity of hearing the doctrines of the Gospel when Philip the Deacon was preaching in Samaria; and, being conscious that his own miracles were mere tricks and delusions, he was likely to be greatly impressed by the real miracles of Philip. He, accordingly, joined the rest of his countrymen who were baptized; though we cannot tell how far he was, at that time, sincere in professing his belief in Jesus Christ. Being himself a native of Samaria, he must have shared in the general expectation, that the Messiah was about to appear; and when he heard the history of Jesus, as related by Philip, he probably believed that the predictions concerning the Messiah were fulfilled in Jesus; but the school of philosophy in which he had studied, taught him to mix up several strange notions concerning the person of the Messiah, with those which he had collected from the scriptural prophecies.

It is certain, however, that the conversions in Samaria were extremely numerous; and when the apostles heard of it, who had continued all the time at Jerusalem, they sent down Peter and John to finish the work which had been so successfully begun by Philip. The latter had not the power of giving to his converts the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, such as speaking foreign languages, or healing diseases; but when the apostles came down, they caused still greater astonishment, by laying their hands on those who had been baptized by Philip, and enabling them to exercise these miraculous gifts. Simon now showed how little his heart had been really touched by the doctrines of the Gospel. He was still thinking of nothing but how he could carry on his ancient imposture; and he even offered the apostles money, if they would sell him the power of communicating these extraordinary gifts of the Spirit. It is needless to say that his offer was rejected. The history of Simon is, from this time, so mixed up with fable, that we

scarcely know what to believe concerning him; but there is reason to think that he visited many places, and particularly Rome, dispersing as he went his own peculiar philosophy, and perhaps carrying the name of Christ into many countries which had not yet received the Gospel from any of the apostles. His followers were very numerous, and divided into several sects, from all of whom no small injury was caused to the Christians, by prejudicing the heathen against them, and by seducing many true believers to adopt the errors and impieties of Gnosticism.

The Gospel, however, had gained a footing in Samaria, and thus far one of the Jewish prejudices was overcome; and since Philip was sent immediately after, by a special revelation from heaven, to baptise an Ethiopian eunuch, it is not improbable that this was also done to remove another prejudice which was likely to prevail with the Jews, who knew that eunuchs were forbidden to enter into the congregation of the Lord, and who might, therefore, think that they were excluded from the Christian covenant. It was thus that the minds of the Jews were gradually prepared for the final extension of the Gospel; but, for some time, it was preached only to the Jews, and it appears to have spread rapidly through the whole of Palestine, and to have met with little opposition for some years after the conversion of Saul. This apostle (for we may already call him by this name) continued a long time in Arabia; and while he was preparing himself for his future labours, the other apostles were engaged in making circuits from Jerusalem, to visit the churches which they had planted.

Being thus obliged to be frequently absent from Jerusalem, they left the Christians of that city to the permanent care of one who was in every way suited to the office of superintending them. This was James, who, in addition to his other qualifications, was a relation of our Lord. The Scriptures speak of him, as well as of Simon, Joses, and Judas, as being brothers of Jesus Christ; but few persons, either in ancient or modern times, have taken this expression in its fullest and most literal sense, and supposed these four persons to have been sons of Joseph and Mary. Some have conceived them to have been half-brothers, the sons of Joseph by a former wife; but perhaps the most probable explanation is, that they were the sons of another Mary, the sister of the Virgin, by a husband whose name was

Cleopas; and thus, though James is called the brother of our Lord, he was, in fact, his cousin.

It seems most probable that he was not one of the twelve apostles, and consequently, that he was a different person from the James who is described as the son of Alphæus. Such, at least, was the opinion of a majority of the early writers; all of whom are unanimous in speaking of James as the first bishop of Jerusalem. We are, perhaps, not to infer from this, that he bore the name of bishop in his own lifetime; and his diocese (if the use of such a term may be anticipated,) was confined within the limits of a single town; but the writers who applied to him this title, looked rather to its primary meaning of an inspector or overseer, than to the sense which it acquired a few years later, when church-government was more uniformly established; and, by calling James the first bishop of Jerusalem, they meant that the Christians of that city, who undoubtedly amounted to some thousands, were confided to his care, when the apostles found themselves so frequently called away. We have seen that the Church of Jerusalem contained also subordinate officers, named Deacons, who were originally appointed to assist the apostles, and would now render the same service to James. A few years later, we find mention of Presbyters or Elders; and though the date of their first ap pointment is not recorded, it probably arose out of the same causes which had led already to the ordaining of deacons, and to the election of James; which causes were the rapidly increasing numbers of the Christians, and the continued absence of the apostles from Jerusalem. The title of Presbyter may have been borrowed from the Jewish Church; or the persons who bore it may have been literally Elders, and selected on that account from the Deacons, to form a kind of council to James, in providing for the spiritual and temporal wants of his flock.

Wherever the apostles founded a church, the management of it was conducted on the same principle. At first, a single presbyter, or, perhaps, a single deacon, might be sufficient, and the number of such ministers would increase with the number of believers; but while the apostles confined themselves to making circuits through Palestine, they were themselves the superintendents of the churches which they planted.

It seems most correct to take this view of the office of the

apostles, and not to consider each, or any of them, as locally attached to some particular town. It is true that all of them planted several churches, and these churches continually looked upon some particular apostle as their first founder. There are cases in which the apostles are spoken of as the first bishops of these churches; but there is no evidence that they bore this title in their own lifetime, nor could the founder of several churches be called, with propriety, the bishop of all of them, or of any one in particular.

Their first care seems to have been to establish an elder or elders, who were resident in the place; but they themselves travelled about from city to city, and from village to village: first, within the confines of Judæa, and at no great distance from Jerusalem; but afterwards, in more extensive circuits, from one end of the empire to the other. There appear also, in addition to the presbyters and deacons, who may be called the resident ministers, to have been preachers of the Gospel, who were not attached to any particular church, but who travelled about from place to place, discharging their spiritual duties. These men were called, in a special manner, Evangelists. One of them was Philip, who, as we have seen, had first been a deacon of the Church at Jerusalem; but after his flight from that city, he seems to have resided principally in Cæsarea, and to have preached the Gospel wherever he found occasion, without discharging his former office of deacon in any particular church. Such labours must have been peculiarly useful in the infancy of the Church; and we have the authority of Scripture for saying that a special distribution of spiritual gifts was made to the evangelists, which qualified them for their important work. Mark and Luke are, perhaps, to be considered evangelists, in this sense, as well as in the more common one of having published written Gospels. Both of them were preachers of the Gospel for many years before they committed the substance of their preaching to writing: and we may suppose that such men were of great assistance to the apostles, by accompanying them on their journeys, or by following up and continuing the work which had been so successfully begun.

It was during one of these circuits of the apostles that another important step was made in the extension of the Gospel, which had hitherto been preached only to the Jews.

It was natural, that people of any other country, who resided in Palestine, and became acquainted with the religion of the Jews, should be led to see the absurdity of their own superstitions, and to adopt a belief in one God, instead of worshipping many. Such appears to have been the case in all the towns which contained a Jewish synagogue; and though the persons who were thus far converted did not conform to the burdensome parts of the Mosaic law, they attended the service of the synagogue, and worshipped the one true God, who had revealed himself in the Jewish Scriptures. Some persons have called them "proselytes of the gate," to distinguish them from "proselytes of righteousness," who adopted circumcision, and became in every respect identified with the descendants of Abraham. A Greek or Roman, who was in any degree a convert to Judaism, could hardly live long in Palestine without hearing of the new religion, which was spreading so rapidly by the preaching of the apostles: but the apostles themselves did not at first understand that they were to preach it to any person who was not a true Israelite, or, at least, a circumcised proselyte. It pleased God to make a special revelation to Peter upon this subject; and the first Gentile who was baptised was Cornelius, who was a centurion of the Roman forces, quartered at Cæsarea. Nothing could be more convincing to the persons who were present at his baptism than that God approved of the admission of this Gentile into the Christian covenant; for he and his companions received the visible and miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit: but though Peter, upon his return to Jerusalem, related the whole transaction, and at the time satisfied the persons who had been disposed to blame him, we shall see that the question of the admission of Gentiles to the Gospel was not yet fully and finally decided.

It is probable that Saul had from the first been more enlightened upon this subject than the rest of the apostles; for it was announced to him from Heaven, at the time of his conversion, that he was to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. We left him in Arabia, and we do not hear of his commencing his office of preacher till the third year after his conversion, when he returned to Damascus. The Jews, as might be supposed, were excessively enraged at the success which attended him; for his learning gave him great advantage in argument; and the circumstances attending his conversion were likely to

be known in Damascus. His enemies, however, prevailed upon Aretas, who still held command of the city, to assist them in their designs against Saul; and finding himself in personal danger, if he stayed there any longer, he thought it best to go elsewhere: but the gates were so carefully watched, to prevent his escape, that his only chance was to be let down the wall in a basket; and, by this contrivance, he eluded the vigilance of his enemies.

He then proceeded to Jerusalem. But with what different feelings must he have entered it from those with which he had last quitted it, when he was breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the Christians! He was still zealous and fervent; still seeking to do God service; but his heart had been humbled and disciplined by the Gospel. The Christians at Jerusalem were at first afraid of him; but he found a friend in Barnabas, whose family was of Cyprus, and whose conversion was the more remarkable, as he had held the office of a Levite. There is a tradition that he had been a fellow-pupil with Saul in the school of Gamaliel; but whatever cause may have made them acquainted, he was aware of the change which had been worked in the mind of Saul, and, upon his recommendation, the former enemy of the Gospel was cordially received by the Church at Jerusalem. None of the apostles were now in the city, except Peter; and this was the first interview between him and Saul. If Peter could have had any doubts remaining concerning the admission of Gentile converts, they were likely to be removed by his conversations with Saul: but the latter had not yet entered upon the field which was afterwards opened to him, in preaching to the Gentiles. His skill in disputation was exercised at present with the foreign Jews who happened to be residing at Jerusalem; for the prejudices of these men were generally less deeply rooted than those of the permanent inhabitants of Judæa. Saul, however, had made himself too notorious on his former visit, for his extraordinary change to pass unnoticed; and finding the same scene likely to be acted against him which had driven him from Damascus, he staid in Jerusalem only fifteen days, and returned to his native city of Tarsus. He continued there for some years; but we cannot suppose that he was inactive in discharging his heavenly commission. He, perhaps, confined himself to the limits of Cilicia; and there is

reason to think that his preaching was the cause of Christian churches being established in that country.

The period of Saul's residence in Cilicia was one of tranquillity and prosperity to the Church at large. The Jews at Jerusalem were not inclined to relax their hostility; but, during the latter part of the reign of Tiberius, the presence of Roman troops in Judæa would be likely to act as a protection to the Christians. Pontius Pilate was deposed from his government in the year 36, and Judæa was then annexed to the presidentship of Syria. This brought Vitellius the president, with his forces, more than once to Jerusalem; and the presence of a Roman army, which always operated as a restraint upon the Jews, would so far procure a respite from molestation to the Christians. Tiberius was succeeded, in 37, by Caligula, who, at the beginning of his reign, bestowed a small territory, with the title of king, upon Herod Agrippa, grandson of Herod the Great. In the following year, he added Galilee to his dominions: but this liberality to an individual was coupled with most insulting cruelty to the Jewish nation. For the four years of his reign he was engaged in a fruitless attempt to force the Jews to erect his statue in their Temple. The opposition to this outrage kept the whole of Judæa in a ferment; and though the President of Syria wanted either inclination or power to enforce his master's command, and the Jews succeeded in their resistance, they were so occupied in measures of self-defence, that they had little time to think of the Christians. This may account, in some measure, for the peace which the churches enjoyed for some years after the conversion of Saul; and the Gospel had now made considerable progress in distant countries. It had been carried as far as Phœnicia, and the island of Cyprus; but the place where it flourished most successfully, next to Jerusalem, was Antioch.

We have no account of the first establishment of Christianity in Antioch, which was the principal city of Syria, and the residence of the Roman president, except that some of the believers who fled from Jerusalem during Saul's persecution, are said to have travelled thither, being probably Jews who resided there, and who had gone up to the festival. These persons may be considered the founders of the Church of Antioch, which therefore deserves to be ranked the second in

order of time, as it was next in importance to that at Jerusalem. It was too far off to be visited at first by any of the apostles: and the number of Christians appears to have been considerable before the apostles heard anything concerning them. The events which occurred at the end of the reign of Tiberius caused a more frequent intercourse between Jerusalem and Antioch; and it was about the period of Caligula's death, in 41, that the apostles thought fit to send Barnabas to visit the Christians of Antioch. We have hitherto anticipated the use of the term *Christians;* but it was about this period that it came to be applied to the believers in Jesus. They were also called Nazarenes, because Jesus had spent so many years of his life in Nazareth, and was generally supposed to have been born there: and the Jews would have particular pleasure in applying this name, which conveyed an idea of reproach, to Jesus and His followers. The believers who resided in Antioch were the first to assume the more pleasing and more appropriate name of Christians, which came into general use, both with friends and enemies, a few years after the period of which we are now speaking.

Barnabas may have been selected for this mission on account of his connection with the island of Cyprus, which is not very distant from Antioch; but he was well suited for it, on account of his zeal. He soon saw that a favourable field was opened for propagating the Gospel; but the Church of Antioch had sprung up of itself, and there was probably a want of persons, not only to direct, but to instruct the flock, whose numbers were daily increasing.

Barnabas, therefore, took the important step of going to Tarsus, and engaging the services of Saul, with whom, as we have seen, he had more than ordinary acquaintance. Saul had, probably, been engaged, for some years, in preaching the Gospel in his native city and its neighbourhood; and he now returned with Barnabas to carry on the same work at Antioch. They continued there for more than a year; and there is nothing which leads us to suspect that the Christians in that city met with any molestation; but everything indicates that the Gospel spread rapidly, and not merely among people of the lowest ranks.

In the year 44, Saul and Barnabas went up to Jerusalem; and the cause of their journey presents another pleasing pic-

ture of the charity of the early Christians. This year, which was the fourth of the reign of Claudius, was memorable for a severe famine, which visited several parts of the empire, and particularly Palestine, and lasted several years. The famine had been foretold some time before at Antioch by a man named Agabus, who came down from Jerusalem; which fact is of importance, as furnishing an instance of those preternatural gifts of the Spirit which were so plentifully diffused among believers of every description in the first century.

We might have been prepared to find the apostles endued occasionally with the power of foretelling future events; as we also know that they were sometimes enabled to read the thoughts of men before they had been uttered by the mouth: but there is reason to think that the gift of prophecy was by no means uncommon among the early Christians. It is well known to readers of the New Testament, that this gift of prophecy is often spoken of without reference to a knowledge of future events; and that it means the power, which was possessed by many believers, of understanding and interpreting the Scriptures. This power, though it may be acquired to a considerable extent by ordinary means, was imparted in a preternatural way, to many of the first believers, who were known by the name of prophets: and, since no gift could be of more essential service to the early Church, when so many new converts were to be instructed in the faith, it is probable that the prophets, in this sense of the term, were much more numerous than those who were gifted to foretell future events. It is, however, certain, that prophecy, in this latter sense, or prediction, was exercised occasionally by the Christians of the apostolic age. Agabus, as we have seen, possessed such a power, and foretold the famine which was to happen in the reign of Claudius: and as soon as it was known that the Christians in Judæa were suffering for want of food, their brethren at Antioch raised a subscription, and sent the money to Jerusalem, by Saul and Barnabas.

The Jews had now, once more, a king of their own: for Herod Agrippa, who had received but a small territory from Caligula, was presented by Claudius with the valuable addition of Judæa and Samaria; so that his kingdom was nearly as large as that of his grandfather. Though Agrippa was really a vassal of Rome, the Jews had recovered a nominal inde-

pendence ; and whenever they were free from foreign oppression, they were sure to think of schemes for harassing the Christians. Agrippa, also, would find it his policy to indulge them in these measures ; and about the time that Saul and Barnabas arrived from Antioch, he was carrying on a persecution.

Two, if not more, of the apostles happened to be now at Jerusalem, and Agrippa was aware of the importance of securing the leaders of the rising sect. The two apostles were Peter and James, the latter being the brother of John the Evangelist. Agrippa contrived to get both of them into his power, which was soon followed by his ordering James to be beheaded. He appears to have been the first of the apostles who was put to death, and nothing authentic is known of his history before this period ; but it seems most probable, that he had not yet undertaken a journey into any distant country, though he may have been actively employed in Judæa, and the neighbouring districts.

Peter's execution was reserved for a more public occasion, when the feast of the Passover, which filled the city with foreign Jews, would be finished : and these feasts, as has been already stated, were generally the signal for the persecution of the Christians. In this instance the design was frustrated. Peter was delivered from prison by a miracle, and effected his escape from Jerusalem ; and the innocent blood which Agrippa had caused to be shed, was speedily avenged, by the king being suddenly struck with a painful and loathsome disease, which soon carried him off. In the meanwhile, Saul and Barnabas had executed their commission, by delivering the money which had been subscribed for the suffering Christians, and then returned to Antioch.

But the famine is known to have continued some years longer ; which may perhaps have operated favourably for the Christians : for, not only had the Jewish rulers sufficient occupation in providing remedies for the national calamity, but some, at least, of those who had been opposed to the new religion, could hardly fail to observe and admire the effect of its principles, in teaching men to love one another, and to give such proofs of their charity in the present season of general distress. It is certain, as we shall have occasion to see, that the liberality of the Christians towards their suffering brethren

continued for some years; and there are also indications of the churches of Judæa being exposed to no particular persecution for some time after the death of Agrippa. His son, who was also called Agrippa, being only seventeen years of age, at the time of his father's death, was not allowed to succeed him in the government, and Judæa was once more subject to a Roman procurator. The first, who was Cuspius Fadus, and his successor, Tiberius Alexander, were so unpopular with the Jews, and the feeling of hostility to Rome was now becoming so general throughout the country, that this may have been another cause of the attention of the Jewish authorities being drawn away from the Christians.

CHAPTER III.

PAUL'S FIRST JOURNEY—DISSENSIONS AT ANTIOCH ABOUT THE GENTILE CONVERTS—COUNCIL AT JERUSALEM—DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN PAUL AND PETER.

WE are now arrived at a most interesting period, not only in the personal history of Saul, but in the propagation of the Gospel. Little is known concerning the evangelical labours of many of the apostles; but it cannot be doubted, that they fulfilled their Master's injunctions of carrying His doctrines into distant countries; and most, if not all, of them appear to have commenced their missionary journeys about the period at which we are now arrived. Hitherto, Samaria and Galilee had formed the limits of their ministry; but the churches of these countries were now regularly established, and Christianity was spreading so fast in other parts of the world, that it was become highly expedient for the apostles to extend their travels. Had they delayed to do so, there was a danger of the new converts receiving the Gospel with an admixture of errors and corruptions; particularly where the Gnostic doctrines had gained a footing; and the power of imparting the miraculous gifts of the Spirit was confined to the apostles only.

It was at this eventful period, that Saul, who was peculiarly

the apostle of the Gentiles, set out on his first apostolic journey. The believers at Antioch were ordered, by a special revelation, to send forth Saul and Barnabas on this hazardous enterprise; and they commenced it by crossing over to the island of Cyprus. The Gospel had been preached there some years before, which facilitated the success of the two apostles: but the conversion of Sergius Paulus, the proconsul and chief governor of the island, was an event which could hardly have been anticipated, and was owing to the miraculous powers which the apostles exercised. Having traversed the whole length of the island, they crossed over to the opposite continent; and, during the course of a rapid journey, they planted several churches in Pisidia, Lycaonia, and Pamphylia. In almost every place they met with the same reception,—of a ready hearing on the part of the Gentiles, and of obstinate resistance on the part of the Jews.

More than once their lives were in danger; but a timely retreat, or, if that was denied, a special miracle, preserved them from their enemies; and the opposition of the Jews was so constant and incurable, that the two apostles openly avowed their intention of devoting themselves, in future, to the conversion of the Gentiles. It was on this journey, that Saul appears, for the first time, to have used the name of Paul; whether he had always borne the two names, as was customary with many of his countrymen, or whether he found it safer, when travelling in heathen countries, to adopt a Roman name. We shall, therefore, cease, from this time, to call him Saul. It was under that name that he had been known as a persecutor of the Church: but it was under the name of Paul, that he preached the doctrine of the cross, and that he wrote the Epistles, which have been cherished by believers of every age, as a ground-work of their faith and hope.

It was probably in the year 45 that this southern part of Asia Minor received the Gospel by the preaching of Paul and Barnabas; and having completed their circuit by returning to Perga, at which place they had landed from Cyprus, they again set sail, and found themselves once more at Antioch. The discussion which was raised by the report of their operations, confirms the remark made above, that the baptism of Cornelius was not considered to have decided the question concerning Gentile converts. The Church of Antioch, which was not, in

any sense, dependent upon that of Jerusalem, may, from the first, have admitted Gentiles within its pale; and Paul and Barnabas, on their late journey, had established the principle in its fullest extent, that no sort of proselytism to the Mosaic law was necessary for a heathen before or after his conversion. This, however, was not the doctrine of a large party belonging to the Church of Jerusalem; and some of these men coming down at this time to Antioch caused great distress to the Gentile converts, by saying that they not only ought to conform to the customs of the Mosaic law with respect to food and other matters of that kind; but that, if they hoped to be saved, it was absolutely necessary for them to be circumcised. Here was a direct subversion of the Gospel covenant, which promised salvation by faith in Christ.

With a view to conciliate the Jews, or to avoid giving them offence, the Gentile converts might have agreed to observe some of the commandments and prohibitions enjoined by Moses; but when they were told that faith alone would not justify them, unless they were circumcised, all their former hopes seemed to be destroyed. It was impossible that such a doctrine could, for a moment, be admitted by Paul, who had received a commission from heaven to preach to the Gentiles, justification by faith, and who had lately been imparting to a large number of Gentile converts the same preternatural gifts which the Jews had received. It was of the utmost importance that the question should be finally settled, and with the general consent, as far as it could be obtained, of the whole Christian Church. For this purpose, it was essential to ascertain the opinion of the apostles; and the attention of the Christians at Antioch would naturally be turned to their brethren at Jerusalem. The apostles, however, had ceased for some time to be resident in that city; but it was visited occasionally by some of them: and Paul and Barnabas, who had been the chief instruments of converting the Gentiles, were commissioned to go to Jerusalem, and to bring back a definitive sentence as to the controverted point.

The council which was held upon this subject is one of the most interesting events which happened during the life-time of the apostles. Peter and John were at this time at Jerusalem. Paul and Barnabas were therefore able to come to a full

understanding with them; and all the firmness of Paul's character was necessary to carry the point which he had so deeply at heart. Among the persons who had gone up with Paul was Titus, who had himself been converted from heathenism. Some of the more bigoted Jews insisted upon his being circumcised; but Paul as resolutely opposed this being done, and Titus continued uncircumcised. The question was then discussed in a full assembly of believers. Peter delivered his opinion, as plainly as Paul could have done, in favour of the Gentile converts; and the whole council being agreed upon the point, a decree was drawn up by James, as head of the Church at Jerusalem, and delivered to Paul and Barnabas. This decree set the question about circumcision entirely at rest. No Gentile was required to submit to it; nor was any part of the Mosaic law imposed upon the Gentiles as necessary to their salvation. But, at the same time, a strong desire was expressed that no offence should be given to the Jews.

There were certain customs which, in themselves, were indifferent, but which few Jews, even after their conversion to Christianity, could be persuaded to lay aside. Of this nature was their abhorrence of eating any animal with the blood in it, or any meat which had been offered in sacrifice to an idol. The Gentiles had no such scruples; and the Jews, who were always unwilling to sit at table with any but their own people, were likely to be seriously annoyed by seeing the Gentile converts paying no attention to a command so positively given by Moses. Accordingly, the letter written from the council recommended strongly that the Jewish prejudices should be consulted in these matters. The Gentile converts were advised to abstain from eating anything which would offend the Jews; and the laxity of morals among the heathen was so deplorable that the council thought fit to add a special injunction against the sin of fornication.

Such appears to be a correct account of the council which was held at Jerusalem, and of the decree which was then drawn up. Many fanciful reasons have been assigned for the apostles laying these particular injunctions upon the Gentile converts; but the simpler view here taken of the transaction may serve to show that the prohibitions were given, not as if the things prohibited were absolutely wrong in themselves, but

because the Jewish and Gentile converts had no chance of living amicably together, unless the Gentiles made concessions upon certain points. It was also a great concession on the part of the Jews when they released the Gentile Christians from the obligation of being circumcised. But here it was necessary for the apostles to stand firm. The great doctrine of Justification was in danger if circumcision had been enforced: but no evangelical principle was affected by the Gentiles consulting the Jewish prejudices at their meals: on the contrary, the Gospel pointed out the necessity of their not giving offence, even in the smallest matters, to any of their brethren. The Jews themselves were released from the ceremonial parts of their law, as soon as they believed in Christ; but there is reason to think that very few availed themselves of this liberty. The apostles continued to live as Jews, with respect to all legal observances, except when they thought that they could advance the cause of the Gospel, by showing that it was really and truly a law of liberty. Paul, the great apostle of the Gentiles, by no means laid aside his Jewish habits; and yet, when there was no fear offending the Jews, or when he saw his converts inclined to give too much importance to outward ceremonies, he showed, by his own practice, as well as by his precepts, that he was perfectly at liberty to live as a Gentile. The spirit of charity, and the furtherance of the Gospel, are the two principles which enable us to understand the conduct of Paul individually, and the celebrated decree of the council.

With respect to the Gentile converts, the decree was at first received by them as a great relief, because it freed them from the necessity of circumcision; and the other part which related to articles of food, could hardly be said to impose any hardship upon them. But in process of time, what was intended by the apostles as a measure of peace and brotherly concord became a burden upon the conscience, and almost a superstition. The order against eating any animal with the blood in it was intended merely as a precaution, when Jews and Gentiles were living in habits of social intercourse; but the prohibition was considered to be in force long after the cause of it had ceased to exist; and there is evidence that Christians, for some centuries, refused to allow blood to be mixed in any manner with their food.

Paul now took leave of Peter and John, with little prospect of their meeting each other soon, if at all, in this world. They were going to engage more actively than before in their respective ministries; and it was well understood between them that Paul had been specially chosen to convert the Gentiles. Peter considered himself to be more peculiarly the apostle of his countrymen; but he fully recognised Paul as his brother and fellow-labourer. The bodily wants of the Christians in Judæa were interesting alike to both of them. The famine, which had begun two years before, was still severely felt; and Paul undertook, as he travelled in other countries, to excite his converts to assist their brethren in Judæa by a pecuniary collection. With this charitable understanding they parted, and, it need not be added, that when Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch with the decree of the council, the contents of it were highly gratifying to the Gentile converts.

It does not appear that they were again molested on the score of circumcision: but the good sense and expediency of the late decree were very apparent, when the Jews and Gentiles came to meet together in familiar and social intercourse. Notwithstanding the advice which had been given, it would seem that the Gentiles sometimes shocked the Jews in the article of their food; or, perhaps, the Jews carried their scruples to an unwarrantable length. It was either now, or at a later period, that Peter came to Antioch. Whenever it was, he once more met with Paul; and, though we may hope that the two apostles again parted on friendly terms, there was, for a time, considerable altercation between them. Peter thought fit to take part with those of his countrymen who declined joining the Gentiles at their meals, though he had before associated familiarly with them, and had shown his conviction that the Jewish customs were unnecessary. He now appeared to attach a greater importance to them, and even Barnabas followed his example. But Paul still stood firm. He saw, as before, that this excessive attachment to unessential points might lead weaker brethren to suppose that they were really essential. He stated this publicly to Peter, and censured him for what he was doing: but, though the Church at Antioch, which contained many Gentiles, was not in much danger of being led into error upon this point, we shall have abundant

proof that there was still a large party at Jerusalem whose views of Christian liberty were much more confined than those of Paul.

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CHAPTER IV.

PAUL'S SECOND JOURNEY THROUGH MACEDONIA, TO ATHENS AND CORINTH: HE VISITS JERUSALEM, AND RESIDES THREE YEARS AT EPHESUS—DISORDERS IN THE CHURCH OF CORINTH — PAUL AGAIN AT CORINTH—HE RETURNS THROUGH MACEDONIA TO JERUSALEM—SENT AS A PRISONER TO CÆSAREA — LABOURS OF OTHER APOSTLES—LUKE WRITES HIS GOSPEL.

IT was now time that the great apostle of the Gentiles should undertake a second missionary journey. It was his wish to have travelled, as before, in company with Barnabas: but they disagreed as to taking with them a nephew of Barnabas, and set out in different directions. We may truly say, in this instance, that God brought good out of evil. It was evil that the two apostles should have any feelings of ill-will towards each other: but the division of their labours carried the Gospel more rapidly over a greater extent of country. It was natural that Barnabas should begin his journey by visiting Cyprus, the country with which he was connected by birth; and it was equally natural that Paul should take an interest in the Cilician churches, which were among the first that he had planted, but which he had not visited on his former journey. His present companion was Silas, or Silvanus, who had come with him on his last return from Jerusalem; and, having passed through Cilicia, they visited the countries of Pisidia and Lycaonia, which had received the Gospel from Paul and Barnabas about a year before.

They now carried with them the letter of the council which settled the Christian liberty of the Gentile converts; and this might at first make us still more surprised to find Paul requiring one of his own converts to be circumcised. This was Timothy, who was a Jew only on his mother's side, and had

not been circumcised before. He had probably embraced the Gospel during St Paul's former visit to this country; and the apostle perceived in him so much zeal, together with such a knowledge of the Jewish Scriptures, that he decided upon engaging him as a companion and fellow-labourer. The policy of having him circumcised was very apparent; for no Jew would have listened to his preaching if this ceremony had been known to be omitted. Nor was there anything inconsistent in Paul circumcising Timothy, though he was bearer of the decree which pronounced such an act unnecessary, and though he had himself persisted in preventing the circumcision of Titus. If he had consented in the case of Titus, he would have countenanced the notion that faith in Christ was not sufficient for justification without circumcision; for that was then the question under discussion. But Timothy had been baptized into all the privileges of the Gospel, without being circumcised. Hundreds, if not thousands, of converts had been admitted in the same country, who were wholly independent of the Law of Moses. It was only when Paul decided to take Timothy with him on his journey, and when he wished to make him serviceable in converting the Jews, that he used the precaution of having him circumcised. To Timothy himself, it was a mere outward ceremony; but it might make him the means of persuading others to embrace the doctrines which he bore impressed upon his heart.

Paul and his companions now traversed a much larger portion of the continent of Asia than he had visited on his first journey. Churches were planted by them in Phrygia and Galatia; and when they came to the sea-coast at Troas, their company was further increased by Luke, who is supposed to have been a native of Antioch, and a proselyte to the Law of Moses. He had followed the profession of a physician; but, from this time, he devoted himself to preaching the Gospel, and for several years was either a fellow-traveller with Paul, or took the charge of churches which the apostle had planted. It was a bold measure for four Jews to introduce a new religion into Greece, the country which might still be said to take the lead in literature and science, though it had yielded in arms to Rome. The Greeks and Romans had long been acquainted with the Jews; but they looked upon their religion as a foolish superstition, and treated their peculiar customs with contempt.

This treatment might be provoking to individual Jews, but it generally ensured for them toleration as a people; and hence they were seldom prevented from establishing a residence in any town within the Roman empire. The Jews repaid this indulgence by taking little pains to make proselytes. In their hearts they felt as much contempt for the superstitions of the heathen, as the latter professed openly for the Jews; but they were content to be allowed to follow their own occupations, and to worship the God of their fathers without molestation. The Christians might have enjoyed the same liberty, if their principles had allowed it; and for some time the heathen could not, or would not, consider them as anything else than a sect of the Jews. But a Christian could not be sincere without wishing to make proselytes. He could not see religious worship paid to a false God without trying to convince the worshipper that he was following a delusion. The Divine Founder of Christianity did not intend it to be tolerated, but to triumph. It was to be the universal, the only religion; and though the apostles, like the rest of their countrymen, could have borne with personal insults and contempt, they had but one object in view, and that was to plant the Cross of Christ upon the ruins of every other religion.

This could not fail, sooner or later, to expose the preachers of the Gospel to persecution; for every person who was interested in keeping up the old religions would look upon the Christians as his personal enemies. Hitherto, however, we have seen the heathen take little notice of the new doctrines. They had been first planted in Palestine, where the heathen had, necessarily, little influence; and those countries of western Asia, which were the next to receive them, were some of the least civilized in the Roman empire. Whenever the Gospel had met with opposition, the Jews were the promoters of it. They considered the Gospel as destructive of the law of Moses: and the notion of being saved by faith in a crucified Redeemer was opposed by the bigoted Jews with the most violent hostility.

The apostles were now entering upon a new field. They were approaching the countries in which learning and philosophy had made the greatest progress; and the pride of learning, when ignorant or regardless of the knowledge which comes from heaven, has always been one of the most for-

midable enemies of the Gospel. The Greeks and Romans were also intolerant of any new religion. The Greeks were unwilling to listen to it, unless it was connected with some system of philosophy. The Romans had passed many laws to prevent the introduction of new religions; and though these laws were not always enforced, it was in the power of any magistrate, who was so disposed, to execute them with vexatious severity.

Paul and his companions had not been long in Macedonia, before they were exposed to a persecution of this kind. Philippi was the town in which they were first arrested; and Paul and Silas were thrown into prison, after having been publicly scourged. It is not easy to understand the precise nature of the charge which was brought against them; and the magistrates of a provincial town may not have been particular in observing the forms of justice towards two Jews. We know, however, that they were accused of violating some of the laws of Rome; and they might have been said to do this, when they denounced all the religious observances of the Romans as wicked and abominable. Heathenism was the established religion of the empire; and the apostles, by endeavouring to destroy it, might naturally be said to be setting themselves against the laws. Added to which, the unbelieving Jews took pains to publish everywhere, that the Christians looked up to Jesus as their king; by which they meant to persuade the heathen authorities, that the Christians were not loyal to the emperor: and it appears to have been upon one or both of these charges, that Paul and Silas were thrown into prison at Philippi. Their imprisonment, however, did not last long. Their chains were loosened by a miracle; and the magistrates were too happy to persuade them to leave the city, when they found that both of them possessed the freedom of Rome.

It might perhaps excite our surprise, that Paul did not plead his Roman citizenship before he was scourged and imprisoned, and to have escaped these indignities; but we cannot tell what motives he may have had for suppressing this fact, when he was first brought before the magistrates. His miraculous release was the means of converting the jailor and his family to believe in Christ; and the salvation of even one soul was a sufficient compensation to the apostle for any sufferings

which he might undergo. Had he pleaded his citizenship at first, though he would not have been scourged, he might have been imprisoned, or even put to death, on the charge of treason against the laws; so that, by taking such a course, he might have delayed, or even destroyed, his efficiency as a preacher of the Gospel: whereas, by submitting to the indignity of being scourged, and by frightening the magistrate, who had ordered the punishment without knowing the condition of his prisoner, he obtained immediate release, without even going through the form of a trial.

His imprisonment at Philippi did not last more than a single day; and though it was found advisable for himself and Silas to leave the city, Luke appears to have continued there; and there is reason to think, that the Macedonian churches enjoyed the advantage of his presence for some years.

Paul and his two other companions visited Amphipolis, Appollonia, Thessalonica, and Berœa. In almost every town they found the same scene acted over again,—of the Jews exciting the populace against them, and endeavouring to expel them by the interference of the magistrates. They could not, however, prevent the Gospel making great progress in Macedonia. The miracles which Paul worked, and the spiritual gifts which he imparted to his converts, made a much greater impression than the misrepresentations and calumnies of the Jews. The Christians of Thessalonica were held in particular esteem by the apostle, and it was with great reluctance that he paid them so short a visit; but his bigoted countrymen obliged him to retire: and, not satisfied with driving him from Thessalonica, they followed him to Berœa, and forced him once more to take his departure.

Silas and Timothy continued in Macedonia, but Paul went on to Athens; and, without any companion, ventured to preach the doctrines of the Cross in the most philosophical and most superstitious city of Greece. His success must have been quite as great as he expected, when Dionysius, a member of the Court of Areopagus, became one of his converts; and, leaving the Christians at Athens under his charge, he arrived, before winter, at Corinth.

The name of Dionysius the Areopagite became very celebrated in after ages; but it was principally in consequence of some voluminous writings, which have been quoted as written

by him, but which are undoubtedly spurious, and were perhaps composed as late as the fourth century. Little or nothing is known authentically of Dionysius, except the brief notice of him which is found in the Acts of the Apostles; but a bishop of Corinth, who lived within a hundred years of this time, speaks of him as having been the first bishop of Athens: from which we may safely conclude that the Athenian Christians were committed to his care. The Church of Athens continued to flourish for a long time, and we know the names of some of its bishops in the second century; so that there may have been good reasons for the memory of Dionysius being held in such esteem. Paul does not appear to have resided long at Athens: but, while he was at Corinth, he was at no great distance off; and the Athenian converts may have had the benefit of his counsel, if he did not occasionally visit them in person.

This was the extent of his travels in the south of Greece; and he must have thought Corinth an important station for his missionary labours, when he stayed there the long period of eighteen months. The Jews tried in vain to excite the proconsul against him; but Gallio, who filled the office, happened to be a man who had no taste for religious disputes; and the fact of Paul having succeeded in converting Crispus, the chief person in the synagogue, must have been a great triumph to the cause of the Gospel. During his residence at Corinth, (from which place he wrote his two epistles to the Thessalonians,) Paul was joined by Silas and Timothy, from Macedonia; and the result of their united efforts was the founding of a flourishing church in one of the largest and most learned cities of Greece.

The learning of the Greeks was a new evil which the apostle had to contend with; and one which was more fatal to the souls of men, than the sword of persecution. Religious impressions are not often destroyed by opposition; but persons who would walk fearlessly to the stake, for the sake of the Gospel, may be seduced, by a show of learning, to take a false view of the religion which they profess. Paul's Corinthian converts were surrounded with dangers of this kind. His own education had made him well suited to dispute with heathen philosophers; and the church which he founded at Corinth, was a proof that his arguments were successful as well as

powerful. The Gnostic doctrines, which were spoken of above, in connexion with the history of Simon Magus, appear, at this time, to have spread as far as Corinth; and if heathen superstition was likely to hinder men from embracing the Gospel, the errors of the Gnostics were likely to pervert and ruin those who had already embraced it: all which may enable us to understand why Paul stayed such a long time at Corinth.

Early in the year 48, he sailed from Greece; and having touched at Ephesus, proceeded to Jerusalem, where he kept the feast of Pentecost. This unhappy country had been suffering many calamities since his last visit to it, two years before. Afte the death of Herod Agrippa, it had again fallen under the government of Roman procurators; and, as if these officers, who were proverbially rapacious, were not sufficient to practise oppression, when appointed singly, there were now two men, Cumanus and Felix, who had the districts of Judæa, Samaria, and Galilee, divided between them.

The reign of Claudius was, in other respects, unfavourable to the Jews. That emperor, for some reason or other, which is not expressly told, ordered them all to quit Rome; and we know that this edict must have caused several thousand persons to look for a home in other countries. It can hardly be doubted that many Christians were sufferers at the same time; for the heathen had not yet learned to distinguish them from the Jews. But this can hardly be called a persecution; and their banishment may not have been owing to any cause connected with their religion. There is also reason to think that the prohibition against their returning to Rome did not last long, but it was likely to have caused many Jews to go back, for a time at least, to the land of their fathers, and their residence in Palestine would serve to increase the feelings of hatred against the Romans, which the rapacity and violence of the procurators had already fomented. Paul's visit to Jerusalem, at this season of misgovernment, was short; and, going from thence to Antioch, he found the Christians of that city continuing in the flourishing condition in which he had left them. Tradition is constant in naming Euodius as the first bishop of Antioch; and we may, perhaps, conclude that he had already entered upon his office, at the time of Paul coming to the city, in the year 48.

After leaving Antioch, the apostle traversed, for the second time, the whole extent of Asia Minor, and took up his residence at Ephesus, which he had visited a few months before, on his way from Corinth to Jerusalem. Ephesus was the capital of a province, and the residence of the Roman proconsul. If its fame for learning and philosophy was not equal to that of Athens or Corinth, it was probably the city of the greatest wealth and luxury which Paul had as yet visited. Whatever was splendid and costly had particular attractions for the inhabitants of Ephesus. They had also been addicted, for a long time, to the arts and delusions practised by the pretenders to magic; and, at the period of Paul coming to reside among them, the Gnostic philosophy, of which magic formed a prominent ingredient, was beginning to gain ground in this part of Asia Minor. All this may account for Paul choosing to make so long a residence in Ephesus. It opened a new and wide field for his apostolical labours; and it was also a central spot, from whence he could easily visit in person, or at least receive accounts from the churches which he had planted in Greece.

There is no evidence of the Gospel having made much progress in Ephesus itself before the arrival of Paul. It had been visited by Apollos, a learned Jew of Alexandria; who, after being converted to Christianity by some of Paul's companions, passed on to Corinth, and was of great use to the Christians in that city, who were now deprived of the presence of the apostle.

Paul's residence at Ephesus continued for great part of three years, though it is not necessary to suppose that he confined himself for the whole of that time to the walls of the city, or even to its neighbourhood. He appears to have paid visits to his converts in other parts of Asia Minor; and there is scarcely any period but this to which we can ascribe those persecutions and misfortunes which befell him in preaching the Gospel. He speaks of having been imprisoned and scourged on several occasions: he had also suffered shipwreck three times; and there is good reason to think that on one, at least, of these voyages he had visited the island of Crete. It is certain, from his own words, that he planted the Gospel there, and that Titus, who accompanied him, was left by him to take charge of the churches. This is the earliest notice which we find of

any regular plan of church government. The island contained many distinct congregations, as might be expected from its numerous cities and towns. Each of these congregations was governed by its own presbyters; but the appointment of the presbyters was specially committed by Paul to Titus, who stayed behind in the island to arrange these matters; and while he continued there he acted as the resident head of all the Cretan churches.

The superintendence of so many Christian communities was now becoming very burdensome to the apostle; and it gives us a melancholy idea of the inherent corruption of the human heart when we find Paul's Corinthian converts so soon forgetting the instruction which he had given them, or, at least, listening to false and insidious teachers. He had resided among them for the long period of eighteen months, and the Church of Corinth might be considered, at the time of his leaving it, to be one of the most flourishing which he had hitherto planted. He had, accordingly, bestowed upon its members a plentiful distribution of these preternatural gifts of the Spirit which it was the privilege of the apostles alone to communicate. It was hardly possible for men to lay aside their belief in Christ when they had such standing evidence of their religion coming from God; but the very abundance of these spiritual gifts was the cause of jealousies and irregularities among the Corinthian Christians. Forgetting that they had received these miraculous powers as an evidence to themselves and others of the truth of what they believed, they were fond of exercising them merely for ostentation, and to prove that they were themselves more highly favoured than the rest. The gift of tongues was particularly calculated for this idle display. The apostles, as we have seen, possessed it to a wonderful extent; and they must have found it of the greatest service when they had to preach the Gospel to men of different nations. But it was also a most convincing evidence to men who were not travelling into foreign countries, and who had merely to converse with their immediate friends and neighbours. If a native of Corinth, who had hitherto been able to speak no language but Greek, found himself, on a sudden, and without any study on his part, able to converse with a Jew, or with any other of the numerous foreigners who came to the port of Corinth, he could hardly

resist the conviction that the power was given him by God; and when he knew also that he received it in consequence of Paul having laid his hands upon him, and that he did not receive it till his mind had fully assented to the doctrines which Paul had preached, it seemed necessarily to follow that his assent to these doctrines was approved by God.

Thus far the gift of tongues operated as an evidence to the believer himself, and was calculated to keep him in the faith which was so preternaturally confirmed. But it would also have the effect of convincing others; for if a Corinthian, who was not yet converted, heard one of his acquaintance speaking a foreign language, and if he knew that the power of speaking it was acquired in a moment, he would be inclined to argue, as the believer himself had done, that a religion which was so powerfully confirmed must come from God. It was with this double view, of keeping his own converts steadfast in their faith, and of enabling them to win over the heathen to join them, that Paul appears to have distributed these gifts so abundantly in all the churches which he planted. It was not the immediate object of preaching the Gospel in foreign countries which made the gift of tongues so valuable at Corinth; and we know that in their own religious meetings, where there were perhaps no persons present except Jews and Greeks, and consequently no occasion existed for conversing in foreign languages, yet the Christians who possessed such a gift were frequently in the habit of exercising it.

It seems obvious to remark that such an exhibition of the gift of tongues would be of no service, not even as an evidence of preternatural power, unless the other persons present in the congregation understood the language which was thus publicly spoken. If a native of Corinth delivered a speech in Persian or Celtic, it was necessary that some of the persons present should know the words to belong to those languages; for, without this knowledge, there was no evidence of a miraculous gift, and the speakers might have been merely uttering unintelligible sounds, which differed, not only from the Greek, but from every other language. Though the Corinthians abused the power which had been given them, there is no reason to think that their abuse of it showed itself in this way. They were fond of speaking in unknown tongues; but they were merely unknown to the inhabitants of Corinth, who had learned

nothing but Greek: they were real languages, which were known and spoken in other parts of the world; and if an inhabitant of one of these countries had happened to be present at the meeting, he would have recognised and understood the sounds of his own language.

The apostle, however, had provided that these unknown tongues should become intelligible even to the Greeks of Corinth. It was a most astonishing miracle, that a man should be suddenly able to express his ideas in a language which he had never learnt. But the power of the Holy Spirit was not confined to influencing the organs of speech: it acted also upon the organs of hearing, or rather upon the faculties of comprehension; and some persons found themselves able to understand languages which they had never learnt. It is plain that all the Christians at Corinth did not possess this power. Those who exercised the gift of tongues in the congregation, were, as has been already remarked, unintelligible to nearly all their hearers; but there were some who were gifted to understand these foreign languages; and when one person had delivered the words which the Spirit put into his mouth, another person translated them into Greek, and so made them intelligible to all that heard them. In this manner the gift of tongues had a practical use, beyond the evidence which it furnished to the truth of the Gospel; and the Christians, who attended the meetings without having themselves received either of these gifts, had the advantage of receiving instruction from persons who were manifestly under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

But though the edification of the Church was the ultimate object of all these gifts, there were many of Paul's converts at Corinth, who, after he had left them, forgot the purpose for which they had received such invaluable blessings. The gift of tongues was by no means the only instance of preternatural power which was imparted to believers. Miracles of various kinds were worked by them; of which, the curing of diseases was, perhaps, the most remarkable: but the possession of such extraordinary powers gave rise, in not a few instances, to jealousy and self-conceit. This may partly be ascribed to the ordinary and natural corruption of the human heart, which was likely to show itself more openly when Paul was no longer present to repress it; but it was also fostered by false and in-

sidious teachers, who took advantage of the apostle's absence, not only to make a party for themselves, but to disparage his personal character, and to unsettle his converts as to their religious belief. The usual fickleness of the Greeks, as well as the love of disputation which marked their philosophy, and which caused them to divide themselves into sects and schools, obtained for these false teachers a too ready hearing among the Christians at Corinth ; but though a large party in the place continued attached to Paul, the attachment partook more of a sectarian spirit than became brethren professing the same faith ; and others of their body openly professed themselves followers of different leaders, who had either been the means of converting them, or had put themselves at the head of a party.

There is evidence that Paul's apostolical labours were impeded by false teachers in other places than Corinth ; and the mischief can, in some instances, clearly be traced to that mistaken zeal for the Law of Moses, which had led the Christians of Jerusalem to insist upon the Gentile converts being circumcised. It has been mentioned that even the decree of the apostolical council did not satisfy the bigots of this party; and some of them appear to have followed Paul in his journeys, and to have taken a pleasure in unsettling the minds of his converts concerning the manner of justification. This was strikingly the case with the imperfectly civilized inhabitants of Galatia, who had lent themselves eagerly to some Judaizing preacher, and had adopted the fatal error, that faith would not justify them, unless they conformed to the Law of Moses.

The great mixture of Jews with the Gentile converts, in every place where a church had been established, made it extremely probable that an error of this kind would meet with many persons to embrace it. The Christians of Greece, if we may judge from those of Macedonia and Achaia, do not appear to have been in so much danger from this quarter : but the religion and the philosophy of heathenism were themselves a sufficient snare to the new converts ; and much of the trouble and anxiety which were caused to Paul by the misconduct of the Corinthians, may be traced to that spirit of pride and ostentation which displayed itself in the Grecian schools.

There are also some traces of Gnosticism having found its way into Corinth, though it flourished most luxuriantly in

Asia Minor, and particularly in Ephesus. Wherever the Jews abounded, the extravagances of Gnosticism were also popular; which may be accounted for, not only by many Jews becoming Gnostics, but by these philosophers having borrowed so largely from the religious opinions of the Jews. It is possible that the name of Christ may have been familiar to many persons, by the discourses and writings of the Gnostics, before they had met with an apostle, or a disciple of the apostles, to instruct them in the truths of Christianity. Doubts about the lawfulness of marriage, abstinence from certain kinds of food, and the questions connected with ascetic mortification of the body and its appetites, may be traced in whole, or in part, to the doctrines of the Gnostics. Paul was often called upon to give his opinion upon such points as these; and we always find him drawing a broad line of distinction between duties which are expressly defined in Scripture, and those matters which, being in themselves indifferent, become right or wrong, according to circumstances, or to the consequences which flow from them. His leading principle was to impress upon his converts, that nothing was essential but that which concerned the salvation of their souls; and that nothing could promote their salvation which was not in some way or other connected with faith in Christ. His own practice was in illustration of this principle. If viewed at different times, or in different places, and with reference to some particular points of practice, his conduct might have been accounted inconsistent; but he was uniformly consistent in doing nothing and omitting nothing which might lead men to think that outward works could justify them. If a disciple abstained from any gratification, from a principle of faith, he was allowed to follow his own conscience; but if the abstinence made him uncharitable, or was viewed as being in itself meritorious, he was told plainly that the Gospel is a law of liberty.

In all such questions we can perceive the sound practical sense and kindly feeling of the apostle, as well as the instruction and illumination which he had received from above. But in opposing the inroads of Gnosticism, he had other points to consider than those which are in themselves indifferent, and may be left to the conscience of each believer. The name of Christ held a conspicuous place in the system of the Gnostics; but there were parts of their creed which destroyed

the very foundations of the doctrine of the Gospel. Thus, while they believed the body of Jesus to be a phantom, and denied the reality of His crucifixion, they, in fact, denied their belief in the death of Christ, and with it they gave up altogether the doctrine of the atonement. They believed that Christ had come from heaven to reveal the knowledge of God; but this was done by His appearing upon earth, and had no connexion with His death. Christ, said they, pointed out the way by which man might be reconciled to God; but it was not by offering Himself as a sacrifice; and the reconciliation was effected when a man was brought to entertain the true knowledge of God.

So also the doctrine of the resurrection was explained away and reduced to nothing by the figurative language of the Gnostics. The reunion of soul and body at the general resurrection had always presented great difficulties to the heathen. The notions even of their wisest philosophers had been so vague and uncertain upon this subject that the apostles may be said to have introduced a totally new doctrine when they taught that all who believed in Christ should rise again to an eternity of happiness. Some had believed the soul to be mortal as well as the body; others could not, or would not, understand how the body after being reduced to dust could be restored to life. But the Gnostics, while they professed to agree with the language held by the apostles, gave to it a figurative interpretation, and said that each person rose again from the dead when he became a Gnostic. The resurrection, therefore, was with themselves a thing already past; and when they died they believed that they were removed immediately from earth to heaven.

It is to be feared that many persons fell a prey to these false and insidious teachers; and the apostles were naturally led to appoint some one person, as was the case with Titus in Crete, to watch over the churches of a particular district. It was the same anxiety for the souls of his flock which caused the apostle of the Gentiles to write so many epistles, which, though filled with local and temporary allusions, and often containing answers to specific questions, were intended also to furnish instruction and consolation to believers of every country and every age. It seems probable that the Epistles to Titus and the Galatians, as well as the first Epistles to the

Corinthians and to Timothy, were written during the apostle's residence at Ephesus, or shortly after. When he wrote to the Corinthians he had planned a journey which was to take him through the continent of Greece to Corinth, from whence he meant to proceed to Jerusalem; and though his departure from Ephesus happened sooner than he expected, he was able to execute his design of visiting Greece.

It is plain that the Gospel made great progress in that part of Asia while Paul was residing at Ephesus; nor is there any evidence of the government having as yet interfered formally to oppose the success of his preaching. The necessity for his leaving Ephesus was caused by a sudden, and apparently unpremeditated, tumult, which was excited by the workmen whose livelihood depended upon the national worship being kept up. These men felt the demand for images and shrines becoming daily less; and it was plain that if Christianity continued to advance, their own gains must speedily be destroyed. It was not difficult, in a city like Ephesus, where the Temple of the Goddess Diana was one of the wonders of the world, for these interested tradesmen to raise a cry in defence of the popular superstition. The attempt was made, and succeeded. The people took up the cause, as they vainly imagined, of the Goddess Diana; and if the apostle had ventured among them during the heat of their excitement he would probably have been torn in pieces.

There are traditions which speak of his being condemned to fight with wild beasts in the Amphitheatre of Ephesus; and the notion may appear to be countenanced by an expression of his own; but there is no certain evidence of his having been exposed to such a punishment. At a later period, and perhaps in the apostle's own days, the Christians were made the victims of such barbarities; but if Paul had been treated in this manner, it must have been with the consent, and by the order, of the civil magistrates; whereas we know that some at least of the persons who presided over the shows and games in the Amphitheatre were disposed to favour Paul. He might also have pleaded his Roman citizenship, if his life had been endangered by such a cruel sentence: all which makes it most probable that he was not exposed to any special persecution, beyond what came upon all the Christians during the continuance of the popular excitement.

But though he thus escaped with his life, he felt it advisable to quit the city; and, leaving Timothy with the same authority over the Christians which he had committed to Titus in Crete, he set out for Macedonia. While he was traversing the latter country he was met by Titus, who was not only able to give him an account of his own flock but also brought him a favourable report of the Corinthian converts. The Macedonian churches were found in a flourishing condition, having had the advantage for some years of the personal superintendence of Luke and other zealous teachers. They were now called upon to give a proof of their principles by contributing money for the relief of the Christians in Judæa, and the call was readily obeyed. When Paul left the country he carried with him a large sum, which had been subscribed for this purpose by the Macedonian Christians; and having prepared the Corinthians for a visit by a second epistle, written to them from Macedonia, he arrived among them before winter, and stayed with them three months.

The Corinthian converts, as already stated, had caused considerable anxiety to the apostle, since the time of his first visit to their city. The spirit of party was showing itself in an attachment to different preachers of the Gospel; and the laxity of morals, which had always been peculiarly prevalent in Corinth, had led to many irregularities. In his first epistle, he had been obliged to use a tone of authority and rebuke; but the effect of it was as successful, as it was seasonable. Though the false teachers had tried to alienate the Corinthian Christians from their spiritual father, he found them not only penitent for what had happened, but willing to obey all his directions and commands. They followed the example of their Macedonian brethren in subscribing for the Christians in Palestine; and though we know little beyond the mere fact of Paul having passed the three winter months at Corinth, we may safely pronounce this to have been one of the periods in his eventful life which caused him the greatest consolation and satisfaction.

His zeal in the cause of the Gospel was not confined to watching over the churches which had been planted by himself in Asia and Greece. He now extended his views to the west of Europe, which, as far as we know, had not hitherto been visited by any of the apostles. It is, however, plain that

the Gospel was spreading itself in that direction, as well as in the east. We have already seen it carried into distant countries by the Jews who returned from the festivals, or by those who had been driven from Jerusalem by persecution. The first of these causes was likely to make Christianity known in Rome at a very early period. When converts were made under these circumstances, they were in danger of receiving the truth with a certain admixture of error; and such may have been the case at Rome: but the favourable account which Paul received at Corinth concerning the state of the Roman Christians, was such as to make him more than ever anxious to visit them in person. He was still bent upon going to Jerusalem with the money which he had collected: but when that mission was accomplished, he intended to go to Rome; and one of the most interesting and valuable of his epistles was written to the believers in that city, during his residence at Corinth.

As soon as the Winter was passed, he set out for Jerusalem; but, instead of going by sea, he retraced his steps through Macedonia. He was joined at Philippi by Luke; and though he was now attended by several companions, they do not appear to have met with any molestation on their way. The journey was performed principally by sea; and wherever they landed, they appear to have found some of the inhabitants already converted to the Gospel. Five years had elapsed since Paul's last visit to Jerusalem; and during that period, his unhappy country had been exposed to sufferings of various kinds. Felix had contrived to get rid of his partner in the office of procurator, and the Jews were in some respects gainers, by having only one person to insult and pillage them; but robbers and murderers infested the country in such numbers, that the government was scarcely strong enough to suppress them; and impostors were now rising up in every direction, who gave themselves out to be the Messiah, and deluded many persons to follow them. It had been the policy of the Romans to change and depose the high-priests, as best suited their own purpose, which opened a new and constant source of intrigue among the candidates for that office; and whoever was fortunate enough to obtain it, did not scruple to employ force to get rid of a rival. At the time of Paul's arrival at Jerusalem, it was difficult to say who was the legiti-

mate high-priest. The station had been filled by Ananias; but upon his going to Rome to answer some complaint, a successor was appointed in the person of Jonathan, who had been high-priest once before. Felix found it convenient to put Jonathan to death; and before a new appointment was regularly made, Ananias returned from Rome, and resumed the office of high-priest. It was just at this period that Paul arrived in Judæa; and though there were many things in the aspect of his country which could not fail to give him pain, it is probable that the Jews had been drawn off from persecuting the Christians, by being themselves harassed with so many internal and external evils.

It is certain that the Jews who had embraced the Gospel amounted at this time to many thousands; but most, if not all of them, still adhered rigidly to the Mosaic Law. Whether there were many who so entirely misunderstood the Gospel, as to think that faith alone could not justify them without compliance with the law, we are not able to decide; but there is reason to think that there were very few Jews who did not feel bound, even after their conversion, to observe the legal ceremonies. Many of these persons could not, or would not, understand the principles which were preached and practised by Paul; and when his enemies gave out, that he taught the Jews, as well as the Gentiles, to look upon the law as of no importance, the report was readily believed, and raised a strong prejudice against him. He had contrived to reach Jerusalem by the feast of Pentecost, at which time the city was always filled by a great influx of foreign Jews. These men could not be ignorant of the progress which the new opinions had made among their countrymen. Paul would naturally be looked upon as the great leader of this defection from the faith of their fathers; and thus the believing and unbelieving Jews united in viewing him with feelings of suspicion, if not of hatred, which feelings were increased by its being known that he was now travelling in company with Gentiles.

The conduct of Paul on this occasion enables us fully to understand his views with respect to the obligation of observing the Law of Moses. He had constantly told the Gentiles, that there was no necessity for their observing any part of it; and he had been equally explicit to the Jews, in telling them that the law was of no effect at all in procuring their justifica-

tion: if they continued to observe its ceremonies, they were to look upon them merely as ceremonies: and, accordingly, when he was living with Gentiles, who cared nothing for the law, he felt no scruples in disregarding its precepts; but when he was living with Jews, whose consciences would have been hurt by a neglect of the legal ceremonies, he observed all the customs in which he had been brought up. His conduct on the present occasion was exactly in conformity with his principle. Having consulted with James, who still continued at Jerusalem as the resident head of the Christian Church, and who perfectly agreed with Paul in his notions about the law, he took upon himself the vow of a Nazarite, and appeared publicly in the Temple, as a person who submitted implicitly to the Law of Moses. This conformity, though it might have satisfied the Judaizing Christians, was not sufficient to remove the prejudices which the unbelieving Jews had conceived against the apostle. Seeing him upon one occasion in the Temple, they got together a crowd of people, with the avowed intention of putting him to death. Nor would they have failed in their purpose, if the commander of the Roman garrison, who was always on the watch to prevent an insurrection, had not suddenly come upon them with his troops, and rescued Paul out of their hands.

This interference of the military saved his life, but was the cause of his sustaining a tedious imprisonment, first at Cæsarea, and afterwards at Rome. The Roman officer who had rescued him from the fury of the people, having ascertained that he was a Roman citizen, sent him to Cæsarea, where Felix, the procurator, usually resided. Paul was here kept a prisoner for two years, though his friends had free permission to visit him, and his confinement in other respects was not rigorous. Felix himself admitted him more than once into his presence, and listened to him while he explained the doctrines of the Gospel: but no practical impression was produced upon his wicked heart. He was well aware how unpopular he had made himself to the Jews by his cruelty and rapacity, and though he was not base enough to deliver up the apostle as a victim of their malice, he so far gratified them as to keep him in prison during the two years of his continuing in his government.

This was the first serious check which Paul had received in the course of his evangelical ministry. Twenty-two years had

now elapsed since his conversion, eight of which had been employed in spreading the religion of Christ through different heathen countries. During this period he had met with constant opposition from the prejudices of the Jews, and had occasionally suffered from the irreligion or superstition of the heathen. But still the Gospel gained ground: the Grecian philosophers were too weak to stand against him in argument; and the Roman government had not yet learnt to treat Christianity as a crime. Even Felix, while he was unjustly detaining Paul as a prisoner, was the unintentional cause of saving his life, and of reserving him for future labours in the service of his heavenly Master. For a time, however, the career of the great apostle was checked; and it is now that we feel particularly, how much the history of the early Church is confined to the personal history of Paul. We should wish to know what progress the Gospel was making in other countries during the two years that Paul was imprisoned at Cæsarea. The other apostles had now been engaged for some years in fulfilling their Master's command of spreading his religion throughout the earth; but we know little of the scenes of their respective preaching. The eastern parts of the world, rather than the western, appear to have been traversed by them. Asia Minor and Greece, as we have already seen, received their knowledge of the Gospel from Paul; to whose name we may add those of Barnabas, Timothy, Titus, Silvanus, and Luke, as the persons who were most active in evangelizing those countries.

Luke, as has been already stated, accompanied Paul to Jerusalem: but there is no evidence that any of the apostle's companions were made to share in his imprisonment. It is more probable, that they all preserved their liberty; and though Paul's personal exertions were for the present restrained, he was under no restrictions as to receiving visits from his friends; and even distant churches might still enjoy the benefit of his advice and superintendence. It has always been asserted, that Luke composed his Gospel, if not at the dictation, at least under the direction of Paul; and no more probable period can be assigned as the date of its composition, than the two years which were passed by Paul at Cæsarea. There is good reason to think that Luke was with him during the whole of this period. He had first travelled in his company in the year 46, and had only left him to take care of the

Macedonian churches. Like all the other persons employed in preaching the Gospel, he received the miraculous assistance of the Holy Spirit; and as far as human instruction or example could fit him for the work of an evangelist, he had the advantage of hearing Paul explain those doctrines which had been revealed to himself from heaven. When they arrived in Palestine, they found, as might naturally be expected in that country, that several writings were in circulation which professed to give an account of the life and actions of Jesus. Many of these histories would probably be incorrect, even when written by friends; but the open enemies of the Gospel would be likely to spread reports concerning its first Founder which would be full of misrepresentations and falsehood. It would therefore become necessary, for the sake of those who already believed, as well as of those who were to be converted, that some faithful narrative should be drawn up concerning the birth of Jesus, His miracles, His doctrine, and His death. It has been said by some writers, that this was done within a few years after the ascension of our Lord, and an early date has often been assigned to the Gospel of Matthew: but it is perhaps safer to conclude, that none of the four Gospels were written till about the period at which we are now arrived; and the Gospel of Luke may be the first of those which have come down to us as the works of inspired Evangelists.

CHAPTER V.

PAUL IS SENT TO ROME WHERE HE STAYS TWO YEARS.—HE PREACHED IN MANY COUNTRIES AFTER HIS RELEASE.—DEATHS OF JAMES THE BISHOP OF JERUSALEM, AND OF MARK THE EVANGELIST.—PERSECUTION BY NERO.—DEATHS OF PETER AND PAUL.

IT was stated in the last chapter, that Paul continued two years in prison at Cæsarea. He, in fact, continued there during the remainder of the government of Felix, who was succeeded by Porcius Festus in 55, which was the second year of the reign of Nero. On the first occasion of Festus visiting

Jerusalem, the Jews endeavoured to prejudice him against his prisoner, and the procurator would have gratified them by sacrificing Paul to their malice. Paul, however, was too prudent to trust himself at Jerusalem; and instead of accepting the offer of having his cause heard in that city, he exercised his privilege of a Roman citizen, and demanded the right of having it heard by the emperor in person, at Rome. Festus could not refuse this appeal; though if he had been left to himself, he would at once have given the apostle his liberty. The latter might also have met with a friend in Agrippa, who had lately received a farther accession of territory, with the title of king. Being now on a visit to Festus, he heard the story of Paul's miraculous conversion from his own mouth; and the apostle's impressive eloquence made, for a short time, some impression upon him: but Agrippa appears to have had but one object, that of keeping on good terms with the Roman government; and he followed up this principle so successfully, that he retained his dominions during the reigns of five successive emperors, from most of whom he continued to receive favours; and he survived the destruction of Jerusalem by several years. We need not therefore be surprised, if the effect produced upon him by Paul's preaching soon passed away; but, at the time, he bore the fullest testimony to his innocence, and would gladly have concurred with Festus in restoring him to liberty. The apostle, however, had himself precluded this by appealing to the emperor, which he perhaps perceived to be now his only chance of visiting Rome. Had he been released from prison, the Jews were still actively on the watch to kill him, and it would have been extremely difficult for him to have escaped from Palestine with his life. Once before, they had laid a plot for destroying him upon a voyage by sea; and it was to avoid this conspiracy, that he had taken the circuitous course of going back through Macedonia, when he made his last journey to Jerusalem. This may have been one of the reasons which inclined him to put in his claim of being heard in person by the emperor; and the appeal having been once made, Festus had no choice as to complying with his demand. He accordingly sent him to Rome in the autumn of 55; but the vessel in which he sailed had a most tempestuous passage, and was at length wrecked on the island of Malta. This obliged the crew to pass the

winter in that island, and Paul did not reach Rome till the beginning of the following year. But his journey from Puteoli, where he landed, enables us to conclude that the Gospel had already made considerable progress in Italy. He found some Christians among the inhabitants of Puteoli; and the believers at Rome, as soon as they heard that he was coming, sent some of their body to meet him by the way.

We are now arrived at an interesting period in the history of Paul and of the Gospel. He had for some time been meditating a journey to Rome; and though at first he had not anticipated that he should visit it in chains, he had at length reached the capital of the world, and had courted an interview with the emperor himself. We know nothing of the result of this hazardous experiment, except that he was allowed to preach his doctrines without any molestation: but if he obtained this permission by the personal indulgence of the emperor, it is difficult to account for his being detained two more years as a prisoner. It is true, that his restraint was by no means severe; for he was allowed to hire his own residence, and the only inconvenience was that of having one of his arms fastened by a chain to the arm of a soldier. This would necessarily make his case known among the soldiers, who relieved each other in guarding prisoners. The prætorian guards were now under the command of Burrhus, who had been tutor to Nero, and still retained some influence over him. If this officer took any interest in Paul more than in the other prisoners committed to him, he may have been the means of gaining him a hearing with the emperor; and he may also have introduced him to the philosopher Seneca, who was an intimate friend of his own, and is said by some ancient writers to have formed an acquaintance with Paul. This, however, is extremely uncertain; and we can hardly venture to say anything more, than that the apostle and the philosopher were in Rome at the same time; and that there are expressions in some works of Seneca, which might support the notion of his having seen the writings of Paul.

It would be more interesting to inquire what was the effect produced by the apostle's presence upon the Jews who resided in Rome. There is abundant evidence that they lived there in great numbers. Such, at least, was the case before the edict of Claudius, which banished them from that city; and it

has been stated that the edict was revoked before the end of that emperor's reign. It is also plain from the apostle's own letter to the Roman Christians that their church was composed of Jews and Gentiles; and we might suppose the Jewish portion of it to have been numerous from the pains taken by the apostle to guard against the notion that the law of Moses could in any manner contribute to justification. There are, however, no signs of the Jews having excited any prejudice or persecution against him, as they had done in other cities. His being a prisoner was probably his protection; and a recollection of the edict, which had so lately sent them into banishment, would be likely to keep the Jews from hazarding another disturbance. It seems most probable that his principal converts at Rome were Gentiles; and it was this circumstance, so gratifying at the time to the apostle, which, in a few years, brought the Christians under the notice of the magistrates, and exposed them for more than two centuries to the cruelties of implacable enemies.

We have the evidence of the apostle himself that he had some converts in the emperor's own household; and there can be no doubt that Christianity was now beginning to spread among people of rank and fortune. One person may be mentioned as being partly connected with the history of our own country. This was Pomponia Græcina, the wife of Plautius, the conqueror of Britain, who was undoubtedly charged with being guilty of a foreign superstition; but when it is added that she was the first person who introduced Christianity into this island, we must be careful not to confound a vague tradition with authentic history. The same remark must be applied to the story of Claudia, the daughter of Caractacus, going back from Rome, and propagating the Gospel in her father's territories. It is perfectly possible for Paul to have assisted in the conversion of Britain or any other distant country by the success of his own personal preaching while he was at Rome: but it does not become us to indulge conjecture where so little is really known. It is certain that up to this time no public or systematic opposition had been made in the capital to the profession of the Gospel; and Paul was not only allowed to deliver his doctrines openly to any of the inhabitants, but persons who came to him from other countries, and brought him accounts of the churches which

he had planted, had full liberty to visit him. Luke had accompanied him from Palestine, and appears to have taken this opportunity for writing the Acts of the Apostles. Timothy also came to Rome during some part of these two years; and we are indebted to this imprisonment for the three Epistles to the Philippians, Ephesians, and Colossians, as well as for the short Epistle to Philemon, who lived at Colossæ, and had been converted by Paul.

The apostle did not recover his liberty till the year 58; and at the time of his leaving Rome we may consider the church in that city to have been regularly established. We have seen that there may have been Christians there very soon after the ascension of our Lord; but if (as appears almost certain) it had not been visited by any apostle before the arrival of Paul, he must naturally be considered the founder of the Roman Church. This is, in fact, the statement of many early writers, though they generally mention the name of Peter as his associate in this important work. That the Church of Rome was founded by Peter and Paul (if we mean by this expression its regular organization, and its form of ecclesiastical polity) may be received for as well-attested an historical fact as any which has come down to us: but the date of Peter's first arrival in Rome is involved in such great uncertainty, and the New Testament is so totally silent concerning it, that we can hardly hope to settle anything upon the subject. If Peter arrived in Rome before Paul quitted it, that is, in the year 57 or 58, the ancient traditions about the Church of Rome being founded by both of them jointly would be most satisfactorily explained. It is also probable that the two apostles would follow the same plan with respect to this church which had been adopted in others, and would leave some one person to manage its concerns. Here, again, tradition is almost unanimous in asserting that the first bishop of Rome was Linus: by which we are to understand that he was the first person appointed over it after the two apostles had left it; and we may, perhaps, safely consider Linus to have entered upon his office as early as the year 58.

Very little is known of the personal history of Paul after his release from Rome. His life was prolonged for eight or ten years, and we may be sure that he devoted it, as before, to the cause of his heavenly Master. He intended to visit Philippi,

as well as the churches which he had planted in Asia Minor; and if he fulfilled his intention of travelling in those directions he was probably going on to Jerusalem. He would be likely, indeed, to have paid more than one visit to the land of his fathers; but that unhappy country could only be viewed with feelings of the deepest affliction by every true Israelite, particularly by one who believed the predictions which Christ had delivered concerning it. Paul would well know that the storm was gathering over it, which, in a few years, would burst upon it to its destruction. There would perhaps be one comfort to him in the midst of his sorrow for his countrymen, which was, that civil disturbances drew off the attention of the Jews from the Christians, and gave to the latter more security in the propagation of their doctrines. It would be necessary, however, to warn the Christians in Judæa of the impending calamity; and this may have furnished the apostle with a motive for visiting them. If he wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews at this time, we may see in it many prophetic warnings which he gave to the Christians concerning the sufferings which they would undergo. There is also some evidence that Matthew published his Gospel about the same period. He dwells, with particular minuteness, on the horrors of the Jewish war; and the Christians of Judæa could not fail to notice the earnest exhortations given to them by Christ Himself, that they would quit the city before the siege began. Matthew is always said to have written his Gospel for the use of the Jewish believers, and it was perhaps circulated principally in Palestine; whereas Luke intended his own composition for the Gentile believers.

Though we may feel almost certain that Paul would visit Jerusalem, after his release from Rome, we are still at a loss to account for his proceedings during the remainder of his life; and yet this period was, perhaps, as interesting as any part of the former years which he had devoted to the service of the Gospel. We have traced his progress through the most civilized portions of the world, and even to the capital of the Roman Empire; but he professed himself also under an obligation to preach the Gospel to nations that were rude and barbarous. He had ample time for fulfilling this sacred duty; and tradition has pointed out the west of Europe as the scene of these later actions of his life. Spain and Gaul, and even

Britain, have claimed the great apostle as the first founder of their respective churches; but the writer of history is obliged to add, that though such journeys were perfectly possible, and even probable, the actual evidence of their having been undertaken is extremely small. We have the apostle's own testimony for his intending to visit Spain; and Clement speaks of Paul having gone to the extremity of the west. This may, perhaps, give some support to the notion of his visiting Spain; and if he went to that country by land, he must have passed through the south of France. But the churches in France which claim the earliest origin, trace their foundation rather to the companions of Paul than to the apostle himself; and there is nothing unreasonable in supposing that France, as well as Spain, contained converts to Christianity before the end of the first century.

The same may, perhaps, be said of our own island, though we need not believe the traditions which have been already mentioned, concerning its first conversion; and it is right to add, that the earliest writer who speaks of Britain as being visited by any of the apostles, is Eusebius, who wrote at the beginning of the fourth century; and the earliest writer who names St Paul, is Theodoret, who lived a century later.

Traditions, preserved by such writers as these, at least deserve some attention; but, in later ages, there was such a taste for fabulous legends, and rival churches were so anxious to trace their origin to an apostle, that we are induced to reject almost all these stories, as entirely fictitious. Still, however, it must appear singular, that none of the apostles should have travelled in a westerly direction, and preached to the barbarous nations which had submitted, in part, to the Roman arms. There might appear no more reason against their going to Germany or Britain, than to Persia or India; and when we consider what was actually done by Paul, in the space of little more than three years, we could easily conceive the whole of the world to have been traversed in the same period, if all the apostles were equally active. But the little which we know concerning their individual labours will be considered more in detail presently. It is sufficient, for the present, to repeat the observation concerning Paul, that eight or ten years of his life remained after his liberation from

Rome, during which, we may be certain that he was constantly preaching the Gospel in different countries.

He undoubtedly visited Rome a second time, and received there his crown of martyrdom: but, before we proceed to that event, the order of time requires us to notice the deaths of two other persons, who were of considerable note in the infant church. These were James the bishop of Jerusalem, and the Evangelist Mark.

We have seen the former appointed to preside over the Christians at Jerusalem, in the second or third year after the Ascension of our Lord. He held this perilous situation (for his life must often have been in imminent danger) for about thirty years; and we are perhaps, in part, to trace his own escape from persecution, as well as the constantly increasing number of his flock, to the disturbances and outrages which occupied the Jews and their governors, for some years before the breaking out of the war. The Jews, however, were well aware of the important service which James had rendered to the Christians; and, in the year 62, they seized a favourable opportunity for putting him to death. Festus, who had kept them in subjection with a strong hand, and who would quickly have suppressed any popular movement, though merely of a religious nature, died in the eighth year of the reign of Nero; and before his successor Albinus arrived, the high-priest, whose name, at this time, was Ananus, put James to death. He knew so little of his victim as to think that he would assist in checking the growth of those doctrines which were spreading so rapidly; and with this view, he placed him on the top of the Temple, that he might harangue the people, and dissuade them from becoming Christians. He did harangue the people; but, as might be expected, he exhorted them to embrace the Gospel; upon which he was immediately thrown down, and either stoned to death or despatched by a fuller's club.

Such was the tragical end of James the Just, who, in addition to his other services, was author of the Epistle which bears his name, and which is addressed to the converted Jews; but the exact date of it cannot be ascertained. His place, as bishop of Jerusalem, was supplied by his brother Simeon, of whose earlier history nothing certain is known; but there is reason to think that Jude, another of the brothers, was one of the twelve apostles; and Joses probably devoted himself to

the same occupation of travelling about to preach the Gospel.

The same year, 62, is connected with the death of another distinguished Christian, Mark the Evangelist; concerning whose earlier history we shall say nothing, except that he was probably not the same person with John, surnamed Mark, who accompanied Paul on his first apostolic journey. If he died in 62, as is stated by Eusebius, he could not be the same with this John, who was certainly alive at a later period, when Paul wrote his Second Epistle to Timothy. Mark the Evangelist is always said to have been the companion of Peter; and tradition also points him out as the first founder of the Church of Alexandria. The date of his visit to that city cannot be ascertained, but it was probably late in his life; and we might also conclude that he did not go there in company with Peter, or the Alexandrian Church would have claimed the apostle as its founder, rather than the evangelist. Mark, however, may have been sent into Egypt by Peter, and his name is thus connected with a church which, for some centuries, was the most distinguished for the learning of its members. His written Gospel appears to have been composed at Rome, to which place he travelled in company with Peter, and he probably continued there some time after the apostle left it; for the Roman Christians, who had heard the Gospel preached by Peter, are said to have requested Mark to commit the same to writing. If Peter visited Rome about the year 58, as was before conjectured, we may approach to the date of the publication of Mark's Gospel; and the writer of it would thus have been likely to see the earlier work, which had been written by Luke; but though the latter Gospel was already in circulation among the Roman Christians, it was not unnatural that the Jewish converts, who would listen with peculiar pleasure to the preaching of Peter, should wish to have a Gospel of their own, written by one of his companions. The stories of Mark having suffered martyrdom at Alexandria are not deserving of credit; but he appears to have died there in the eighth year of Nero, and to have been succeeded in the government of that Church by Annianus.

The early history of the Alexandrian Church would be extremely interesting, if we had any authentic materials for

collecting it; but the fact of its being founded by Mark, is almost the only one which is deserving of credit. It has been stated that Gnosticism, which was a compound of Jewish and heathen philosophy, took its rise in Alexandria; and if men were willing to exchange their former opinions for this absurd and extravagant system, we might suppose that Christianity would not have been rejected by them, as altogether unworthy of their notice. It appears, in fact, to have attracted the attention of the learned at Alexandria sooner than in any other country. It was a long time before the Grecian philosophers condescended to notice the speculations of an obscure Jewish sect. But the Jews themselves, who resided at Alexandria, were many of them men of learning, and were not only well acquainted with the written works of the heathen, but had frequent opportunities of conversing and disputing with philosophers of various sects who came to Alexandria. One consequence of this intercourse was, that there was a greater toleration of different opinions in that city than was generally allowed in Grecian schools, where the adherents of one class of doctrines professed to hold all others in contempt. And there is reason to think that the Christians were for a long time allowed a full liberty of discussion in Alexandria, till their numbers began to be formidable to their heathen opponents. This also led to the Alexandrian Christians being more remarkable for their learning than those of other countries; and having to explain their doctrines to Jews and Gentiles who were well accustomed to disputation, they were obliged to take more pains in instructing their converts; and thus the Christian schools were established at an early period, which in the second and third centuries produced so many learned and voluminous writers.

There was also another circumstance which, perhaps, contributed to the diffusion of Christianity, not only in Alexandria, but through the whole of Egypt. There was a set of men living in the country, who in later times might have been called monks or hermits, but who were known in those days by the name of Therapeutæ. Instead of frequenting the large towns, or taking part in the ordinary affairs of life, they retired into the deserts or less inhabited districts of the country, and passed their time in a kind of

mystical or religious contemplation. Their religion appears to have been free from many of the impurities and superstitions of the heathen, and a resemblance has been traced between some of their opinions and practices and those of the Jews. It has been thought, indeed, that the Egyptian Therapeutæ were Jews; and the notion has derived support from the fact, that at the same period there was a Jewish sect living in Palestine, known by the name of Essenes. The habits of these men bore a close resemblance to those of the Therapeutæ; and there may, perhaps have been some connexion between them, which would account for both of them adopting such a singular mode of life. But there are strong reasons for concluding that the Therapeutæ were not Jews, though some persons of that nation may have joined them from Alexandria; and their religious opinions, as was before observed, contained some traces of a Jewish origin.

It can hardly be denied that the morality of these sects came nearer to the standard of the Gospel than that of any other men who were unenlightened by revelation. In some respects they ran into the extreme of making themselves entirely useless to their fellow-beings; and society could not be carried on if their habits were generally adopted. But if we compare them with what we know of the heathen, or even of the Jews, at the time when the Gospel was first preached, it must be allowed that there was no place where the soil was better prepared for receiving the heavenly seed than among these contemplative and ascetic recluses of Egypt. There are traditions which speak of many of them having been converted to the Gospel; and such a result was certainly not improbable. We shall also see, in the course of this history, that the first Christians who adopted monastic habits were resident in Egypt, which might be accounted for by some of the Therapeutæ retaining their ancient mode of life after their conversion. It is to be regretted that so little is known of the effect produced upon these men by the first preaching of Christianity; but it was thought right to give this short account of them, though we can only say from conjecture that some of them received the word of life from the Evangelist Mark.

Though we know so little of the two great apostles, Peter

and Paul, during the later years of their lives, we may assert with confidence that they both suffered martyrdom at Rome, which brings us to the first systematic persecution of the Christians by the heathen. In the year 64 a great fire happened at Rome, which burnt down ten out of the fourteen regions into which the city was divided. The Emperor Nero was strongly suspected of having caused the conflagration; but he tried to silence the report by turning the fury of the citizens against the Christians. The rapid growth of Christianity was sure by this time to have raised against it many enemies, who were interested in suppressing it.

When Paul preached it for the first time at Rome, as a prisoner, he met with no opposition; but during the six years which followed his departure the grain of mustard-seed had been growing into a tree, which threatened to overtop the stateliest and most luxuriant plantations of heathenism. This is the real cause of the different reception which the apostle met with on his first and second visit. If the Emperor had wished to raise a cry against the Christians on the former occasion, he would not have found many, in proportion to the population of the city, who had even heard of their name. But before his second visit the new religion had gained so many followers that the persons interested in supporting the ancient superstitions began to be seriously alarmed. The emperor himself would be likely to care little about religion; but he would care still less for the sufferings of the Christians, if he could make his people believe that they had set fire to Rome. It is certain that many calumnies were now beginning to be spread, which were likely to raise prejudices against the Christians. The heathen could not, or would not, understand their abhorrence of a plurality of gods, and set them down as atheists. They were even represented as grossly immoral in their conduct, and as practising horrid and inhuman rites at their religious meetings. Such notions may have arisen, in part, from the love-feasts and sacraments of the Christians; but they are also to be traced to the Gnostics, all of whom were addicted to magic, and some of them did not scruple to defend and to practise the most licentious and disgusting immoralities. The Gnostics were for a long time confounded with the Christians, by those who pretended to despise all foreign superstitions; and thus, when the Christians

were accused of having set fire to Rome, the populace was easily excited to demand their blood.

The emperor's gardens were used as a circus for the occasion; and the remorseless tyrant disgraced himself and human nature by taking part in the games, while the Christians were tortured by new and barbarous inventions, to furnish amusement for the spectators. Humanity shudders to hear of these innocent victims being enclosed in the skins of beasts, that they might be torn in pieces by dogs; or covered with pitch and other inflammable materials, that they might serve as torches to dispel the darkness of the night! The number of persons who suffered in this way is not stated; but the Romans appear from this time to have acquired a taste for persecuting the Christians, which continued more or less to the end of Nero's reign. It was during this period that the two apostles, Peter and Paul, came to Rome; and it seems probable that Paul arrived first. He approached the capital from the east, and there is no reason to think that he entered it as a prisoner; but he appears to have lost his liberty soon after his arrival; and his imprisonment was now much more close and severe than it had been on the former occasion.

Under other circumstances the apostles would have rejoiced in having the company of Peter; but they were now fellow-sufferers, or rather fellow-victims; and it is not certain whether they were even allowed to visit each other as prisoners, though the place is still shown in Rome in which they are said to have been confined. It seems most probable that Peter wrote his two Epistles before this last journey to Rome; and if he had visited the people to whom the first of them is addressed, we are able to say that he had traversed nearly the whole of Asia Minor. He had also gone much further to the east, if the Babylon, from which he wrote the Epistle, was the celebrated city on the Euphrates. But it has been supposed by some writers to be a figurative name, by which he chose to speak of Rome; and if this was the case, it is most probable that he wrote the Epistle during some former visit which he paid to the capital. The second Epistle was certainly written not long before his death; but there is no evidence of his having written it during his imprisonment. We may speak with more certainty with respect to Paul, whose second Epistle to Timothy was undoubtedly sent from Rome during the

period of which we are now speaking. Timothy was still taking charge of the apostle's converts at Ephesus; and the Epistle pressed him to come to Rome before winter; but whether the two friends met again in this world cannot be ascertained.

The eventful lives of the two great apostles were now drawing to a close. Paul appears to have been called upon to make a public defence; but the sequel shows, as might have been expected, that all defence was useless. He was ordered to be beheaded, that mode of punishment having probably been selected out of regard for his being a citizen of Rome; and as early as in the third century, a spot was shown on the road leading to Ostia, in which his body was said to have been buried. We are equally in the dark as to the personal history of Peter during his last visit to Rome. There are traditions which speak of his once more encountering Simon, the Samaritan impostor and celebrated founder of the Gnostics, during one of his visits at Rome; but whether such a meeting ever actually took place, and whether it was at this last or a previous visit, is entirely uncertain. We can only venture to assert, that Peter was imprisoned for some time before his death at Rome; and it is generally stated, that both apostles suffered martyrdom on the same day. Peter, not being a citizen of Rome, was ordered to be crucified, which was a common punishment for criminals of the lower orders. But the apostle showed his humility, by requesting to be fastened to the cross with his head downwards, as if he felt himself unworthy to die in the same manner with his heavenly Master. If the story may be received, which was current at the end of the second century, that Peter saw his wife led out to martyrdom, and encouraged her to bear the trial, it is probably to be referred to the period of his own suffering. The place of his interment was also shown, like that of Paul's, as early as in the third century, but not on the same spot; for Peter is said to have been buried on the hill of the Vatican, where the magnificent church now stands which bears his name.

This persecution began, as was stated, in the year 64, and the reign of Nero ended in the June of 68; but it is uncertain whether the Christians were exposed to suffering during the whole of that period. The deaths of the two apostles must

be placed some time before the death of the emperor; perhaps in the year 67, which thus becomes a memorable and melancholy era in the History of the Church. Some persons have supposed, that the persecution was felt by the Christians not only in the capital, but throughout various provinces of the empire. This point, however, has never been clearly proved. The rapid progress of Christianity may have led to the same results in different countries, and provincial magistrates may have been encouraged in any acts of cruelty, by knowing that the emperor allowed the Christians to be tortured; but there is no evidence that Nero published any general edict, which made Christianity a crime, or which ordered the magistrates to suppress it. We may hope that, even in the capital, the thirst for blood was satisfied, when that of the two apostles had been shed. The Roman Christians, as we have seen, had been committed some years before to the care of Linus; and there is reason to think that Linus also suffered martyrdom during Nero's persecution. The Church was then committed to the charge of Anencletus, whose name has thus been preserved as that of the second bishop of Rome.

CHAPTER VI.

LIVES OF THE APOSTLES.—DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.—FLIGHT OF THE CHRISTIANS TO PELLA.—RISE OF THE NAZARENES AND EBIONITES.—EFFECT OF THE DISPERSION OF THE JEWS. — GNOSTIC NOTIONS CONCERNING CHRIST.

BEFORE we pursue the History of the Church in its chronological order, we will pause to consider the progress which had already been made by the Gospel. When Paul wrote to the Colossians, during his first imprisonment at Rome, he spoke of the Gospel having been then *preached to every creature which is under heaven*. We are not to press the literal interpretation of these words, any more than of those of our Saviour, who said, when speaking of the destruction of Jerusalem, *The*

Gospel must first be published among all nations. Nevertheless, it was literally true, at the time when the Epistle to the Colossians was written, that the Gospel had been preached in every country of the then civilised world, as well as in many countries which were still barbarous. Paul himself had visited the whole of Palestine, with part of Syria, including the capital; the sea-coast of Asia Minor, on the south and west, with great part of the interior, and the islands of Cyprus and Crete; Macedonia in its widest signification; Attica, the Peloponnesus, and Rome. All this was done by one man, in the space of twelve years; after which time the same apostle continued his missionary labours for eight years more; and during the whole of both periods, there is every reason to believe, that the other apostles were performing similar journeys with similar success.

It has already been observed, that we know very little of the personal history of the twelve apostles; but the remark may be repeated here, that they probably did not begin their distant travels till the time of Paul's first journey in 45; and there is reason to think that very few of them survived the destruction of Jerusalem. We have already mentioned the little that is known concerning Peter. James, the brother of John, was beheaded in the year 44, before his apostolical labours could have begun, though the fact of his death may serve to show that he had been a zealous preacher to his countrymen at Jerusalem. John himself outlived all the other apostles, and did not die till the end of the century; so that we shall have occasion to notice him hereafter.

Of the nine other apostles, we have very little authentic information, though there are abundant traditions concerning their preaching in distant countries, and suffering martyrdom. These accounts are not supported by the earlier writers, except with relation to Andrew and Thomas: the former of whom is said, by a writer of the third century, to have preached in Scythia, and the latter in Parthia. The term Scythia might be applied to many countries; but Andrew is said more precisely to have visited the country about the Black Sea; and, ultimately, to have died in the south of Greece. If it be true that the apostle Thomas preached in Parthia, we are to understand this expression of the Persian territories; and he is also said to have travelled as far as India. Some persons have

thought to find traces of his apostolical labours in a settlement of Christians lately discovered on the coast of Malabar; and we are told that these persons lay claim to the apostle Thomas as their founder. But though this interesting church may be of great antiquity, there is good reason to doubt the truth of such a tradition; and part of the country which is now called Arabia, was often spoken of in ancient times as India. It is, therefore, highly probable that Thomas preached the Gospel in the central parts of Asia; and the church of Edessa, a city on the east bank of the Euphrates, may have been planted by this apostle. But the story of Abgarus, the king of that people, having written a letter to our Saviour, and being cured of a disorder by a person sent to him from the apostle Thomas, is worthy of little credit, except as it confirms the tradition of Thomas having preached at Edessa. His remains were shown in that city as early as in the fourth century; and there is reason to think that he did not suffer martyrdom.

There is the same doubt concerning the proper meaning of the term India, in another tradition, concerning the apostles Matthew and Bartholomew. It was reported, at the end of the second century, that a Hebrew copy of the Gospel, composed by Matthew, had been found in India, which had been brought to that country by Bartholomew. It is plain that a Hebrew translation of this Gospel could only have been of use to Jews, who are known to have been settled in great numbers in Arabia: so that, if there is any truth in this story, it probably applies to Arabia, and we may conclude that one or both of these apostles visited that country. Matthew is reported upon other, but later, authority, to have preached in Ethiopia, which was another name occasionally used for Arabia. He is also said to have led a life of rigid abstemiousness, and not to have met his end by martyrdom.

Concerning three of the apostles, Simon, surnamed the Zealot, Matthias, and James the son of Alphæus, we know absolutely nothing; at least if we follow the opinion expressed in this history, that the James now mentioned was a different person from the bishop of Jerusalem. There was, however, a brother of the bishop, named Jude, who was probably the same with the apostle of that name; and since Paul, in a letter which he wrote in the year 52, speaks of *the brethren of our Lord* travelling about with their wives, and preaching the

Gospel, we can hardly help referring the expression to Jude, who at that time was pursuing his apostolical labours; but the particular countries in which he travelled are not known. We learn, from other authorities, that he was married, and left descendants. He was also the writer of the Epistle which is still extant; and there is reason to think that he survived most of the other apostles. It has been stated that none of them lived to the end of the century, except John; but it is probable that Philip died at an advanced age; and his residence, in the latter part of his life, was at Hierapolis in Phrygia. He also was married, and had daughters, which was perhaps the cause of his being sometimes confounded with the other Philip, who was one of the seven deacons, and lived at Cæsarea, whose unmarried daughters are mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles.

This brief sketch of the personal history of the Apostles will be unsatisfactory to those who would wish to be furnished with anecdotes concerning the founders of our faith. Such a wish is perfectly reasonable, if materials could be found for gratifying it; and the historian of the Church could not better discharge his duty, when engaged upon the affairs of the first century, than in relating circumstances connected with the lives and deaths of the apostles. Their history would be that of the first propagation of the Gospel. But it has been already stated more than once, that we know very little concerning them; and upon this interesting subject, the Christians of the third and fourth centuries appear to have been almost as much in the dark as ourselves. Traditions must have been extant in the second century, connected with the history of the apostles, and collections of them are stated to have been made by writers of that period; but they have not come down to our day, except, perhaps, amidst a heap of extravagant fictions, which make it impossible for us to ascertain whether any of the stories are genuine. The lives of all the apostles may be read in most minute detail, not only in the compilations of modern writers, but in works or fragments of works, which are probably as old as the second century; and we shall see, when we come to that period, that literary forgeries began then to be common, which pretended to relate the personal adventures of the companions of our Lord. The only inspired work upon the subject, which is entitled the

Acts of the Apostles, might, with more propriety, be termed the Acts of Paul; and they do not bring down his history beyond the termination of his first imprisonment at Rome. The account of his second imprisonment, and of his death, might have been related much more minutely, if credit could be given to the statements of later writers; but it is impossible to do so, in the great majority of instances, without laying aside every principle of sound and rational criticism: and the same remark will apply to the voluminous legends which are still extant concerning the rest of the apostles.

We may now pursue the history of the Church during the period which followed the martyrdom of Peter and Paul. There still remain more than thirty years before we come to the end of the first century; but of these thirty years very little is known. We have been able to trace the history of Paul with some minuteness; but the short and scanty account which has been given of the other apostles, will show that very little is known of their individual labours.

The three successors of Nero in the empire held their disputed titles for only eighteen months; and in the year 69 Vespasian was declared emperor. The event which makes his reign so peculiarly interesting, is the destruction of Jerusalem by his son Titus, who, without knowing the counsels which he was called to fulfil, was employed by God to execute His vengeance upon his infatuated and rebellious people. The ecclesiastical historian may be thankful that he is not called upon to describe the horrors of the Jewish war. It is sufficient for our present purpose to state that the discontent, which had been showing itself at intervals for several years, broke out into open hostilities in the year 66, when the Jews were successful in defeating a Roman army commanded by Cestius Gallus. This was the signal for open war. Vespasian himself took the field against them; and the Jews soon found that their only hope was in the power of Jerusalem to stand a siege. The command of the besieging army was then committed to Titus; and though, according to the notions of those days, he was not a blood-thirsty conqueror, it is calculated that more than a million of Jews perished in the siege. The city was taken in the year 72, and, from that time to the present, Jerusalem has been trodden down by the Gentiles.

There can be no doubt that the Jews were partly excited to

this obstinate resistance by the expectation that a mighty and victorious prince was soon to appear among them. One impostor after another declared himself to be the Messiah; and the notion was so generally spread of an universal empire being about to begin from Judæa, that Vespasian thought it expedient to proclaim the fulfilment of the expectation in his own person. The fact of his first assuming the imperial title in Judæa supported such a notion; but Vespasian, like other usurpers, was mistrustful of his own right, and could not altogether dismiss his fears of a rival. We are told that when Jerusalem was taken, he ordered an inquiry to be made after all the descendants of David, that the Jews might not have any person of the royal race remaining. If they had not been too much occupied by their own misfortunes, they would perhaps have gratified their hatred of the Christians by denouncing them to the emperor, as persons who owned for their king a descendant of the house of David. In one sense this was true of the Christians; but though Vespasian might have been inclined to view the Christians with jealousy, there is good reason to think that, on the present occasion at least, they escaped his inquiries.

His only object would have been to ascertain whether any person of the royal line was likely to oppose him as a competitor for the empire. The notion of a kingdom *which was not of this world* would have given him no uneasiness; and there is no reason to suppose that Vespasian paid any attention to the religion of the Christians, unless we conclude that the miraculous cures which he pretended to perform in Egypt were set up in rivalry to that preternatural power which so many of the first converts had received from the hands of the apostles.

Our Saviour had predicted the siege and destruction of Jerusalem, in the plainest terms, to His disciples. With equal plainness He had warned the Christians to quit the city before the siege began. History informs us that they profited by these merciful predictions; and, if the dates have been rightly assigned to the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, the publication of them at that period would forcibly remind the Christians of the necessity which there was of flying from the devoted spot.

It has even been said that new and supernatural warnings

were given to them, to retire from Jerusalem; but it is certain that, as early as the year 66, before the city was at all surrounded by armies, many of the inhabitants left it; and a place named Pella, on the eastern side of the river Jordan, is mentioned as providing a refuge for the Christians. We may conclude that they were accompanied by Symeon, who, since the year 62, had presided over the church at Jerusalem; and the number of fugitives must have been extremely great, if he was attended by all his flock. But it is not improbable that several of the Jewish believers quitted Palestine altogether, and settled in different parts of the empire. This would be the case particularly with those who had already laid aside their attachment to the Law of Moses. The destruction of the city, and the dispersion of its inhabitants, would confirm them in their belief that God no longer intended the Jews to be a peculiar people. They would thenceforth cease to think of Judæa as their home; and so far as they could lay aside their national character, they would join themselves to the great body of Gentile Christians, who were now beginning to be numerous in every part of the world.

The effect of so many converted Jews being suddenly dispersed throughout the empire must have been felt in various ways. In the first place the mere accession of numbers to the Christians must have brought them more under the notice of the heathen; and though this was likely to be followed by persecution, it would also operate in making the new religion more widely known, and therefore more widely propagated. In the next place, it would tend to confirm the notion already entertained by the heathen, that the Christians were merely a Jewish sect: and though the contempt which was felt for the Jews might hitherto have served as a protection to the Christians, this feeling was likely to be changed when the war was brought to a conclusion. The Jews, who had before been only distinguished for a peculiar religion, were now known throughout the empire as an obstinate and turbulent people, whose desperate courage had for a time defied the whole strength of Rome, and who could only cease to be formidable by being utterly wiped away from the catalogue of nations. So long as the Christians were confounded with the Jews, they would be likely to share in these feelings of suspicion and ill-will; and persons who might not have cared for the increasing propaga-

tion of the Christian doctrines would view with dislike, if not with actual alarm, the general diffusion of opinions which were supposed to be peculiar to the Jews.

These were some of the effects which might have been produced upon the minds of the heathen by the dispersion of so many converted Jews at the close of the war. But it is probable that consequences of a different kind were felt by the Christians themselves. It has been already observed that those countries which received the Gospel before the arrival of any apostle, received it most probably by the hands of Jews; and hence there are traces of even the Gentile converts becoming attached, in a greater or less degree, to the Law of Moses, in every place where a Christian community was formed. If this had been so from the beginning, it was likely that the adoption of Jewish customs would become still more general when so many churches received an accession of Jewish members. We, perhaps, see traces of this in the practice, which was continued for some centuries, of the Christians observing the Jewish Sabbath on the seventh day of the week, as well as the Sunday, or first day. That the Sunday was called the Lord's day, and was kept holy in memory of the Lord having risen from the dead on that day, can be proved from the practice of the apostles, as recorded in the New Testament. But there is also evidence that many Christians continued for a long time to attach a religious sanctity to the Saturday, as being the Sabbath of the Jews; and such a custom may have derived support from the cause above mentioned, when so many Hebrew Christians were dispersed throughout the empire. The same remark may be applied to what has been already mentioned in a former chapter, that the prohibition of eating things strangled, or any animal which was killed with the blood in it, was considered of perpetual obligation by all, or nearly all, Christians, for some centuries.

The country in which Pella is situated formed part of the territories given by the Romans to Agrippa, who had prudence and policy enough to keep on good terms with the conquerors, without actually taking up arms against his countrymen. The Christians, therefore, remained unmolested in Pella and the neighbourhood; and as soon as it was possible for them to return to Jerusalem, many of them did so, accompanied by their bishop, and set up again a Christian church

amidst the ruins of their city. Without attributing to the Jewish Christians any want of patriotism, or any feeling of attachment to the Roman government, it was natural for them to view the destruction of Jerusalem with very different emotions from those of their unbelieving countrymen. They knew that this event, disastrous and fatal as it was to their nation, had been positively foretold by the Founder of their religion: many of them had long acknowledged that the distinction between Jew and Gentile was to exist no longer; and the total subversion of the Jewish polity would be likely to make still more of them embrace this once unwelcome truth: to which it may be added, that the expectation of a temporal prince, descended from the family of David, could hardly be entertained by the Christians, who already acknowledged a spiritual completion of the prophecies in Jesus, the Son of David. All this would incline them to acquiesce much more patiently than the rest of their nation in the awful judgments of God; and if their Roman masters allowed them to return to the land of their fathers, they would accept the indulgence with gratitude; and though their walls were not to be rebuilt, and one stone of the Temple was not left upon another, they were too happy to return to their homes, as a quiet, inoffensive people, and to continue to worship the Father in spirit and in truth.

It might, perhaps, be too much to assert, that from this period the only inhabitants of Jerusalem were Christians, though it is not improbable that such was the case when the settlers from Pella first took possession of the ruins. That these men were sincere believers in Christ cannot be doubted: but there is reason to think that they still continued to observe some of the peculiarities of the Law of Moses; not that they considered any of these ceremonies as essential to salvation, but they had scruples as to leaving them off altogether, and added them, as external ordinances, to the more pure and vital doctrines of the Gospel.

This, however, was not the case with all the Jewish Christians who had fled beyond the Jordan. Many of them remained in that district; and from them we are to date the origin of two sects, whose religious opinions have led to much discussion. These were the Nazarenes and Ebionites, whose doctrines have been confounded by later writers, and both of

them have received the name of heretics: but there is good reason to think that, at first, there was an essential difference between them, and that the Nazarenes had no peculiar tenets, except their continued and rigorous attachment to all the ceremonies of the Mosaic Law.

We have seen that this attachment prevailed very generally among the Jewish believers; and it is probable that it had been held by many of the persons who fled to Pella. The destruction of Jerusalem, as has been already remarked, would be likely to diminish the numbers of these adherents of the law; and from this time the Judaizing Christians formed a distinct sect or party in the Church, though from the nature of the case they would be principally confined to Judæa; and accordingly, when we find mention of them as existing in the fourth century, they were still living in the neighbourhood of Pella. They then bore the name of Nazarenes, and were considered to differ in some important points from the orthodox Church: but there is no evidence that this name was exclusively applied to them in the first century, or for a long time after. At first it was a term of reproach, given by the Jews to all the believers in Christ; and though the term Christian, which was of Greek or Latin origin, was more suited for general adoption than a name which was taken from a Jewish town, it was not unnatural that the Judaizing Christians should still continue to be called Nazarenes. Even their believing brethren might give them this appellation; and if the sect afterwards came to adopt erroneous opinions, we can easily account for a distinct heresy being mentioned as that of the Nazarenes.

The Ebionites were, from the first, much more decidedly heretical, though they also took their origin at the same period from the neighbourhood of Pella. It must be remembered that this part of the country had long lost its former connexion with Judæa, though Herod the Great had held it with his other possessions, and it now formed part of the small dominions of Agrippa. Ever since the captivity of the ten tribes, it had been inhabited, like Samaria, by a mixed race of people, who blended some parts of the religion of the Jews with superstitions imported principally from the East. When the Christian fugitives came among them from Jerusalem, their doctrines would naturally excite the attention of the natives,

particularly of such as had already in part adopted Judaism. Another set of opinions had also been gaining ground for some time in this part of the world, which has already been mentioned under the name of Gnosticism. Simon Magus had preached it with great success in his native country, Samaria, from whence it could easily be carried across the Jordan to the country where Pella was situated. This leader of the Gnostics made great use of the name of Christian in his new system of philosophy. He considered Christ as one among many emanations from God, who was sent into the world to free it from the tyranny of evil. He received whatever he had heard of the personal history of Jesus, and fully believed him to be the divine emanation called Christ. But he would not believe that Jesus had a real substantial body: he thought that a divine and heavenly being would never unite himself with what was earthly and material; and having heard of Christ soon after His ascension, before any written accounts of His birth and death were circulated, he formed the absurd and fanciful notion that the body of Jesus was a mere spirit, or phantom, which only appeared to perform the functions of a man, and that it was not really nailed to the Cross. It has been already observed that this impiety entirely destroyed the doctrine of the atonement.

Such was the notion entertained by Simon Magus concerning Jesus Christ; and his followers, the Gnostics, were for some time called Docetæ, from a Greek word implying their belief that the body of Jesus was a phantom. The notion, in fact, continued for some centuries, and was perpetuated, after the declension of Gnosticism, by the Manichees. But before the end of the first century, another division of Gnostics invented a new doctrine, which was, perhaps, owing to the general circulation of the written Gospels. It was plainly stated in these books, and persons living in Judæa could not be ignorant of the fact that Jesus had, in every sense of the term, a human body. The names of His mother, Mary, and her husband, Joseph, were generally known; and His growth from childhood to manhood, as well as other circumstances in His life, proved Him to be subject to the usual laws of human nature. All this could not be denied by the Gnostics; but still they would not bring themselves to believe that a being of heaven could so intimately unite itself with a being of earth

as to be born of a human parent; and, to get rid of this difficulty, a new doctrine was devised, for which they seemed to find some support in the written Gospels.

They had read the account of the baptism of Jesus, on which occasion the Holy Spirit descended visibly from heaven, and lighted upon Him. The Gnostics interpreted this to mean that Jesus, up to the time of his baptism, had been a mere human being, born in the ordinary way, of two human parents; but that, after that time, the man Jesus was united to Christ, who was an emanation from God; and that the two beings continued so united till the crucifixion of Jesus, when Christ left him and returned to heaven. It was their belief in the divinity of Christ which hindered them from believing that He was born of a human mother; and hence they divided Jesus and Christ into two distinct beings,—Jesus was a mere man, but Christ was an emanation from God.

The name of the person who invented this doctrine has not been ascertained; but, before the end of the first century, it was held by two persons who became eminent as the heads of parties,—the one a Greek, named Carpocrates, and the other named Cerinthus, who, if he was not a Jew, admitted much of the Jewish religion into his scheme of Gnosticism. Both these persons were openly and scandalously profligate in their moral conduct, which enables us to point out another division among the Gnostics; for, while some maintained that all actions were lawful to one who possessed the true knowledge of God, and accordingly indulged in every species of vice, others considered it the duty of a Gnostic to mortify the body, and to abstain even from the most innocent enjoyments. Carpocrates and Cerinthus belonged to the former of these divisions; and Cerinthus, not content with encouraging his followers in the grossest dissipation, held out to them a millennium of enjoyment at the end of the world, when Christ was again to appear upon earth, and his faithful followers were to revel in a thousand years of sensual indulgence!

It is possible that Cerinthus did not rise into notice till towards the end of the century; but Gnosticism had undoubtedly made great progress in the world before the period at which we are now arrived; and though its early history is involved in some obscurity, it is plain that it borrowed largely from the religion of the Jews, as might be expected in a system which

was begun by a native of Samaria. The Ebionites, whose origin led us into this discussion, were a branch of the Gnostics, and they are said to have appeared at first, like the Nazarenes, in the neighbourhood of Pella. Their name signifies, in Hebrew, *poor;* but it has been doubted whether they were not called from an individual whose name was Ebion. They were represented by the ancients as Jews, and some moderns have considered them to be Christians. But though their tenets partook both of Christianity and Judaism, they cannot properly be classed with either party. The first Ebionites may, by birth, have been Jews, and they may have fancied that they were embracing the doctrines of the Gospel; but they chose to disfigure both forms of religion, and they should properly be described as a branch of Jewish Gnostics. If they were originally Jews, they made a strange departure from the faith of their fathers, for they did not acknowledge the whole of the Pentateuch, and utterly rejected the writings of the prophets. Notwithstanding this heterodoxy, they sided with the most bigoted of the Jews, in adhering to all the ceremonies of the Mosaic Law, although they professed to be believers in Jesus Christ. It was on this principle that they paid no respect to Paul as an apostle; and when his epistles came into general circulation, they were rejected by the Ebionites.

Their connexion with the Gnostics is proved by their adopting the notion that Christ descended upon Jesus at his baptism; and their belief in Christ's divinity led them to maintain that Jesus was born, in the ordinary way, of two human parents. They would not admit any account which spoke of Christ, the Son of God, being conceived in the womb of the Virgin, or of his being united from the moment of his birth with a human being. They had a Gospel of their own, written in Hebrew, and made up in part from that of Matthew, from which they had expunged everything relating to the miraculous conception, and to the birth of Christ. It is stated, however, that the later Ebionites became divided upon this point; and though all of them believed that Christ came down from Heaven, and united himself to Jesus, some of them maintained that Jesus was conceived miraculously by the Virgin, while others, as stated above, believed him in every sense to be an ordinary human being. It should be added in favour of the Ebionites, that though

their religious tenets were erroneous and extravagant, their moral practice was particularly strict, which perhaps forms the most prominent contrast between themselves and the Cerinthians.

This account of the Ebionites has been introduced in this place, because they are said to have arisen in the neighbourhood of Pella, about the time of the Christians resorting thither from Jerusalem. It will be remembered that all these Christians were converted Jews, and all of them had once conformed to the Law of Moses. Those who continued to do so were known by the name of Nazarenes: but though they adhered to the ceremonies of the law, they were firm believers in Jesus Christ, and looked for salvation only through Him. Others of their body, while they kept the same strict observance of the law, adopted the Gnostic notions concerning Jesus Christ, and were known by the name of Ebionites. They were probably of the poorer sort, as was implied in their name; and it does not appear that they were numerous. But there was always a danger among the Jewish converts, lest their attachment to the Law should incline them to adopt the errors of the Ebionites and other Gnostics. There is, however, reason to believe that the church at Jerusalem continued pure. It had witnessed the most awful calamity which had ever befallen the Jewish nation; and its members could not forget, on returning once more to Jerusalem, that a remnant only had been saved, even they who believed in Jesus.

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CHAPTER VII.

SEES OF JERUSALEM, ANTIOCH, ROME, AND ALEXANDRIA.—EPISTLE OF CLEMENT.—SPURIOUS WRITINGS.—DOMITIAN PERSECUTES.—CAUSES OF PERSECUTION.—BANISHMENT AND DEATH OF JOHN.—EXILES RECALLED BY NERVA.—CANON OF SCRIPTURE.

THE destruction of Jerusalem, though the details of it cannot be read even now without horror, was not likely at the time to produce any effect upon the external circumstances of the

Gentile Church, which was now so widely spread throughout the world. The reigns of Vespasian and Titus present no instance of the Christians being molested on account of their religion; and we cannot doubt that the Gospel made great progress during that period. Very little is known of the history of any particular Church; but the four cities, which afterwards became most celebrated in the Christian world, and which took precedence over all other sees, have preserved the names of their bishops from the beginning. These cities were Jerusalem, Antioch, Rome, and Alexandria, which are here mentioned in the order of their foundation; or if Mark went to Alexandria before any apostle visited Rome, the authority of Peter and Paul gave a priority to the latter city over one which was founded merely by an evangelist. The apostolic sees, as they were called, soon came to be looked upon with particular respect; not as having any power or jurisdiction over the rest, but as being most likely to have preserved apostolic traditions, and to have kept their faith uncorrupted.

There were many other churches besides the four lately mentioned, which were founded by apostles, some of which might claim precedence in order of time: but Jerusalem was, without dispute, the mother of all churches; and Rome, as the metropolis of the world, and Antioch and Alexandria, as capitals of provinces, naturally acquired an importance over inferior places. If we may judge from the length of time during which the bishops of these four cities held their sees in the first century, we have perhaps another proof, that Christianity was not then exposed to much opposition from the heathen. The appointment of Symeon to the bishopric of Jerusalem has been already mentioned; and he held that station to the beginning of the following century. It has also been stated, that Euodius is named as the first bishop of Antioch, though the date of his appointment is not ascertained. He was succeeded, and probably about the year 70, by Ignatius, whose interesting history will occupy us hereafter; but his continuing bishop of that see for upwards of thirty years, may be taken as a proof that the period which we are now considering was one of tranquillity to the Christians of Antioch. The same may be said of Alexandria, where the three first successors of Mark held the bishopric for almost half a century.

The church which, on many accounts, would be most interesting to us, if its early history had been preserved, is that of Rome; but the reader will have seen that we know little concerning it, except the fact of its being founded conjointly by Peter and Paul. The names of the bishops of Rome have been handed down from the time of these apostles, but with considerable confusion, in the first century, both as to the order of their succession and the time of their holding the bishopric. It seems, however, most probable that the three first bishops of the imperial city were Linus, Anencletus, and Clement. The name of the latter deserves a conspicuous place after that of the apostles, whose companion and successor he was; and it is to be regretted that we cannot tell whether he lived to the end of the century, or whether he died long before.

This difference of opinion would be of little importance, if Clement had not left a writing behind him which is still extant; and so few events have been preserved in the history of the Church, during the time that Clement was bishop of Rome, that every incident in his life becomes of value. The writing alluded to was a letter written by Clement, in the name of the Christians at Rome, to their brethren at Corinth; and this interesting document has been preserved almost entire to our own day. We may gather from it that the Roman Christians had lately been suffering some persecution, though the storm had then passed away: which has led some persons to suppose the letter to have been written soon after the end of the reign of Nero, while others refer these expressions to a later persecution, which will be mentioned presently, and which happened in the reign of Domitian. The letter was caused by some dissensions in the Church of Corinth, the exact nature of which is not explained: but the Corinthians had shown a fondness for dividing into parties very soon after their first conversion; and notwithstanding the expostulations and reproof addressed to them by Paul, the same unhappy spirit prevailed among them after his death. It appears to have burst out still more violently on the occasion which called forth the letter from Clement; and it is pleasing to see one church taking this kind and charitable interest in the affairs of another.

The letter is full of earnest exhortations to peace, which we may hope, were not thrown away upon the Christians of

Corinth, when we find that the letter was carefully preserved in that city, and, to a late period, was read publicly in the congregation. Nor was Corinth the only place in which it was treated with this respect. Other churches had also the custom of having it read in public; and, whether we regard the apostolical character of its author, or the early period at which it was composed, it was well deserving of holding a place in the estimation of all Christians, next to the writings of the apostles themselves.

The Epistle of Clement may be safely said to be a genuine work which has come down to us from the first century, beside the canonical books of the New Testament; and there is reason to think that it is older than some of the writings of the last surviving apostle, John. It is probable that Christianity, at this early period, had produced many authors. The name of Barnabas, the companion of Paul, and that of Hermas, who is mentioned in his Epistle to the Romans, are both of them prefixed to works which are ascribed respectively to these two persons. It is known that several books were composed at an early period, which were filled with stories concerning our Lord and His apostles. Many of them professed to have been written by apostles; but they were evidently spurious, and some of them appear to have been written by Gnostics. If they had come down to our day, we should, perhaps, have found in them a few authentic traditions concerning the first preachers of the Gospel: but, on the whole, their loss is not to be lamented; and we cannot but acknowledge the merciful superintendence of God, who has allowed the genuine works of the apostles and evangelists to be preserved, while He has protected His Church from being imposed upon by others which were once widely circulated.

The peace which the Christians enjoyed during the reigns of Vespasian and Titus, does not appear to have been disturbed during the earlier part of the reign of Domitian. That tyrant exercised too much cruelty towards his heathen subjects, to allow them much time for harassing the Christians; and when, at length, he began to persecute the latter, it was, perhaps, rather to draw off the public attention from his other barbarities, than from any regard for the national religion. His persecution probably began in the latter years of his reign; and it was felt, not only in the capital, but in various

parts of the empire. One cause of suffering to the Christians, which has been mentioned already, arose from their being confounded with the Jews; a mistake which had been made from the first by the heathen, who pretended to despise all foreign religions, and would not take the pains to distinguish the Christians from the Jews.

When Jerusalem was destroyed by Titus, it was ordered that every Jew should henceforward pay to the Capitol at Rome the same piece of money which had before been levied upon them for the maintenance of the Temple. Domitian, who probably wanted the money for his own purposes, exacted the payment with great severity; and it is mentioned by a heathen historian, that some persons who professed the Jewish religion, but endeavoured to conceal it, were compelled to pay the tax. There can be little doubt that these persons were Christians, who asserted with truth, that they were not Jews, but were not believed by the officers of the government.

This measure of the emperor, though flagrantly unjust, may have been attended with little personal suffering to the Christians. But another heathen historian informs us that several persons, about this period, had adopted Jewish manners; one of whom, Acilius Glabrio, was put to death, in the fifteenth year of Domitian, on the charge of atheism. Here we have positive proof of capital punishment being inflicted on account of religion, and atheism was one of the charges frequently brought against the Christians. It was well known that they refused to offer worship to the numerous deities of paganism; and the votaries of idolatry could not, or would not, understand that their religious adoration was confined to one God. It was also remarked that the Christians had no temples nor images: there was nothing in their forms of worship which met the public eye; and this contributed to give strength to the report that they were, in religion, atheists. It might, however, excite some surprise that this charge, even if it was generally believed, should have given rise to persecution: for, though the Romans, as has been already observed, were by no means tolerant of other religions, and several laws had been passed against the introduction of foreign superstitions, yet it cannot be denied that persons had been known to maintain atheistical principles without having been brought

into any trouble on account of their opinions. Philosophers had openly argued against the existence of any First Cause, or any superintending Providence; and though there were some who did not like to say, in plain terms, that there were no gods, yet it was universally allowed and acknowledged that their principles led, necessarily, to atheism.

The question now presents itself, why these philosophers were suffered to maintain their sentiments, and to oppose the popular mythology, without having any notice taken of them by the laws; and yet the Christians, who were falsely accused of doing the same thing, were persecuted and put to death? It might perhaps be said, that the philosophers confined their reasoning to the schools, and to a few of their scholars, who chose to employ themselves upon such speculations; whereas the Christians preached their doctrines openly, and forced them upon the notice of the public, if not of the government itself. The remark is just, and may lead the way to an explanation of the question proposed; but we must not forget to add, that what was true with respect to the philosophers, was a mere idle calumny when urged against the Christians.

Atheism was really taught in some schools of philosophy; and the wretched and irrational system made no progress among the great bulk of mankind. The teachers of it were therefore suffered to pursue their speculations without encountering any public opposition. But the Christians, who were accused of being atheists, were the preachers of a doctrine which not merely amused the ear or exercised the head, but forced an entrance to the heart. Wherever it made its way, the national religion, which recognised a plurality of gods, fled before it. The heathen priests, and all who made their livelihood by the maintenance of idolatry, began to feel that the struggle was for their very existence: hence arose the many calumnies which were circulated against the Christians; and when Acilius Glabrio was put to death on the charge of atheism, his real crime was that of refusing to worship more gods than one.

Many persons were condemned on the same grounds; some of whom suffered death, and some had their property confiscated. Among the former was a man of distinguished rank, Flavius Clemens, who had not only been consul in the preceding year, but was uncle to the emperor, and his sons

had been destined to succeed to the empire. None of these distinctions could save him: he and his wife Domitilla were convicted of atheism, that is, of being Christians, for which crime Clemens himself was put to death, and his wife banished.

These anecdotes lead us to some of the causes which exposed the Christians to persecution; and we find another in what is said of the same Clemens, by a writer who meant it as a reproach, that he was a man whose indolence made him contemptible. This inattention to public affairs was often objected to the Christians as a fault; and they could hardly help being open to it, when their religion required them to abstain from many acts which were connected with heathen superstitions. It was not that the Gospel commanded them to withdraw from public life, or that they felt less interest in the welfare of their country: but it was impossible for them to hold any office, or to be present at any public ceremony, without countenancing, in some degree, the worship of the gods, or the still more irrational error of paying divine honours to the emperor.

A Christian was therefore obliged to abstain from these exhibitions, or to do violence to his conscience; and it was soon observed that such persons seemed to take no interest in the public festivities and rejoicings, which recurred so frequently for the amusement of the Roman populace. To accuse them, on this account, of indolence and apathy, was perhaps merely an expression of contempt; but a tyrant, like Domitian, might easily be persuaded that a refusal to worship him as a god, implied disaffection to his person and his government. The Christians would thus become suspected of a want of loyalty; and though they prayed daily for the emperor and for the state, yet because their prayers were offered in secret, to the one true God, they were accused of having no regard for the welfare of their country. Domitian probably listened to insinuations of this kind, when he consented to the execution of his uncle, Clemens; and persons who were interested in suppressing Christianity may easily have persuaded him to look upon the Christians as enemies to the state. In one instance he was certainly actuated by jealousy and fear of a rival. He had heard of the report which had been so prevalent at the beginning of the reign of his father, that a great prince was expected to appear in Judæa,

and that He was to come from the house of David. He accordingly ordered inquiry to be made on the spot; and some professors of Gnosticism gave information that the children or grandchildren of the Apostle Jude were descended from David. These men appear to have resided in Judæa, and were in a very humble station; they even worked with their own hands to obtain a livelihood; and when they were brought into the emperor's presence, he was so struck with their simplicity, and so convinced that they had no thoughts of any temporal kingdom, that he immediately ordered them to be released.

We may hope that the Christians of Palestine were thus protected from persecution; but the same period which was fatal to so many Christians in Rome, was felt with equal severity by their brethren in Asia Minor. The chief city in those parts, which was also the most distinguished for its Christian church, was Ephesus; and, before the end of the century, it had the advantage of becoming the residence of the last surviving apostle.

We have scarcely had occasion to mention the name of John since the year 46, when he was present at the council held in that year at Jerusalem; and we, in fact, know nothing of his personal history, nor of the countries in which he preached the Gospel, till the latter years of his life, which appear to have been spent in Ephesus or the neighbourhood. His presence there was very necessary to check the inroads which were then making upon the true faith by the Gnostics. There is some evidence that Cerinthus himself was living at Ephesus; and there was no country in which Gnosticism had made more alarming progress. John has himself mentioned a Gnostic sect, which bore the name of Nicolaitans. These men laid claim to Nicolas, who had been one of the seven deacons, as their founder; but it can never be believed that he countenanced the gross impurities of which the Nicolaitans are known to have been guilty. They also showed the laxity of their principles by consenting, in times of persecution, to eat meats which had been offered to idols. This was now become the test of a genuine Christian. If he was brought before a magistrate on the ground of his religion, and refused to pollute his mouth by tasting a heathen sacrifice, he was immediately ordered to punishment. Many of the Gnostics

were equally firm in expressing their abhorrence of heathenism; but some of them found it convenient to comply, among whom were the Nicolaitans; and it has been said that the example had already been set them by Simon Magus, the original father of Gnosticism.

The Nicolaitans had an opportunity of acting upon this disgraceful principle at the end of the reign of Domitian. John's own writings are sufficient evidence that the Christians among whom he was then living had been suffering from persecution. One of them, Antipas, who belonged to Pergamos, has had the distinction of being specially named by the apostle, though we know nothing of the circumstances which attended his martyrdom. It was not long before the apostle was himself called upon to be an actor in the scenes which he describes. If we could believe a writer of the second century, John was sent to Rome, and plunged into a vessel of boiling oil, from which he came out unhurt. The story is not now generally received as true; but we have his own evidence that he was banished to the island of Patmos; and it was during his residence there that he saw the Revelation, which he afterwards committed to writing.

Banishment to distant islands was at this time a common punishment: and it is probable that many Christians were thus transported from their homes for no other crime than that of worshipping Jesus, and that they continued in exile till the end of Domitian's reign. The tyrant died in the September of 96, and was succeeded by Nerva, whose first act was to recall all persons from banishment, including those who were suffering on account of religion. This would allow John to return once more to Ephesus; and we may hope that the few remaining years of his life were passed in a peaceful superintendence of the Asiatic churches. His chief cause of anxiety was from the errors of the Gnostics, which were now beginning to draw away many Christians from their faith in Christ, as it had been taught by the apostles. It has been said that his Gospel was specially directed against these erroneous doctrines; and there are passages in his Epistles which plainly allude to them. But the date of all his writings is attended with uncertainty, except perhaps that of his Apocalypse, which must have been written either in the island of Patmos, or soon after his return to Ephesus. The most probable opinion seems to

be that his Gospel and Epistles were also written in the latter part of his life.

It has been said by some writers, that what is called the Canon of Scripture was settled by the Apostle John shortly before his death. But there seems little foundation for such a statement, if it mean that all the books which are now contained in the New Testament were then collected into a volume, and received the authoritative sanction of the last of the apostles. That John had read all the writings of the other apostles and evangelists, can hardly be doubted; for they were composed and published many years before his own death. We may also be certain that he could not be deceived or mistaken as to the real author of any of these writings; so that in this sense he may be said to have settled the Canon of Scripture: but there is no evidence of his having left any decision or command upon the subject. There are traditions which speak of his having seen and approved of the three other Gospels, and of his publishing his own as a kind of supplement to them; and if we adopt the opinion, which seems much the most probable, that the Gospel of John was written at the close of his life, he would hardly have failed to have had the works of his predecessors in view when he was composing his own. That his Gospel is very different from the other three, must have been observed by every reader of the New Testament; and the close agreement, even as to words and sentences, between Matthew, Mark, and Luke, has given rise to many conjectures as to the probable cause of it. The agreement is most striking in our Saviour's discourses and parables: and if the writers intended to report his actual words, there would be nothing extraordinary in this; but we may also remember that the evangelists had been engaged in preaching the Gospel for many years before they committed it to writing; and having to repeat the same parable, or the story of the same miracle, over and over again, to different hearers, they would naturally adopt a set form of words. The apostles had heard each other preach in this way, for perhaps twelve years before they left Jerusalem: and Mark, who accompanied Peter, and Luke, who accompanied Paul, would be likely to agree with each other, and with Matthew, in style, and even in words, when they came to commit to writing what they had been so long in the habit of speaking.

It is also not improbable that the earliest of these three Gospels may have been seen by the two other evangelists; and whichever of them wrote the last, may have seen both the former; which may account still more plainly for there being so close an agreement between all the three. But though they thus support each other in all material points, and no contradictions have ever been discovered in their narratives, so as to throw any suspicion upon their honesty or veracity, it has often been remarked, that there is sufficient variety between them, to remove any suspicion of their having conspired together to impose a falsehood upon the world.

If we could be certain that John intended his Gospel as a supplement to the other three, we should want no further proof of their credibility. They then come to us under the sanction of an inspired apostle, who had not only seen the same miracles, and heard the same discourses, which the three evangelists had recorded, but who had the assistance of a divine and infallible guide to preserve him from error and imposture. The Gospel, however, of John, does not appear to be strictly and literally a supplement to the other three. Nor need we suppose that its author intended to make it so. It appears to have been composed at Ephesus; and parts of it were specially directed against the errors of the Gnostics. At the same time, it is very probable that John purposely omitted some circumstances in the history of Jesus, because they were already well known from the works of the other evangelists. Wherever he goes over the same ground, he confirms their narrative; but it was obviously his intention to devote a large portion of his work to the discourses of our Saviour; and in this respect, he has supplied a great deal which the others have omitted.

Though we may not admit the tradition that John settled the canon of the New Testament by any formal and authoritative act, yet he may be said to have finally closed it by his own writings: for it is certain that no work has been admitted into the canon or list of the New Testament, whose date is subsequent to the death of John. There is no evidence that the canonical books were ever more numerous than they are at present. None have been lost, or put out of the canon; and when we think of the vast number of Gospels and Acts which were circulated in the second and third

centuries, and which bore the names of apostles and their companions, we may well ascribe it to more than human carefulness, that none of these spurious compositions ever found a place among the canonical Scriptures.

On the other hand, there is reason to think that a few of the writings which now form part of the New Testament, were not universally received in the first century, and for some time later. The Epistle to the Hebrews, that of Jude, the second Epistle of Peter, and the second and third of John, were among this number; and there were some churches which do not appear to have received them so early as the rest. This, however, only shows the extreme caution which was used in settling questions of this kind. It was very possible for a letter to be preserved and read in Asia Minor, or Palestine, and yet for many years to have elapsed before it became known in other parts of the empire. As Christianity spread, and the intercourse between distant churches became more frequent, the doubts which had been entertained as to the genuineness of any writing were gradually removed; and though some churches were later than others in admitting the whole of the New Testament, there is no evidence that any part of it was composed later than the end of the first century; so that, though we may reject the tradition of the canon of Scripture having been settled by John, we can hardly doubt, as was before observed, that he had seen and read the writings of all the other apostles before his death.

Anecdotes have been preserved, which show the warm and zealous affection felt by the aged apostle for the souls of his flock. He knew that they were beset with enemies from within and without. The heathen were impatient for license to renew their attacks, and the Gnostics were spreading their poison with the subtilty of serpents. The presence of an apostle among them, as well as the circulation of his Gospel, could hardly fail to check the evil; and a story has been recorded, which we might wish to believe, from its natural and affecting simplicity, that the venerable apostle was at length so weakened by age, that his disciples were obliged to carry him to the religious meetings of the Christians; and when even his voice failed him, he continued to address them with what might be called his dying words,—"My dear

children, love one another." There is reason to think that his life was prolonged till the beginning of the reign of Trajan, who succeeded Nerva in the January of 98; and thus the death of the last surviving apostle coincides very nearly with the close of the first century.

He has himself told us in his Gospel, that a notion had been entertained that he was not to die; and we know from history, that reports were circulated in later times which confirmed such an expectation. There is no need to expose the erroneousness of such a belief. A writer of the second century mentions his tomb as being then to be seen at Ephesus; and there is every reason to think that he died in that city. It has been said that the Virgin Mary accompanied him when he went to settle in that part of Asia; and it is very probable that such was the fact, if she had not died at an earlier period: but unless her life was protracted to an unusual length, she was released from her earthly pilgrimage before the time when John is supposed have gone to Asia. It is perhaps singular, that no authentic account has been preserved of the latter days of one who had received the high privilege of being called the Mother of our Lord; but nothing whatever is known of her from the New Testament, after the time that her Son had ascended into heaven, and she was left with his apostles and other followers in Jerusalem. The same spirit of invention which gave rise to so many stories concerning the apostles, has also supplied many marvellous occurrences which befell the Virgin Mary; but they can only be read to be rejected, and claim no place in the authentic annals of the Church.

The reader will now have observed the truth of the remark which was made above, that we know very little concerning the last thirty years of the first century; and yet it would be difficult to name any period which was of greater interest to the Church. It was during those thirty years, that all the apostles, except John, who were not already dead, were gradually removed from the world, and committed their flocks to their successors. Many churches whose early history is unknown, but which were flourishing at the beginning of the second century, must have been planted at this period. There is every reason to think that the progress of conversion was rapid; and what was only a rivulet at the time of the

death of Paul, and which is then almost lost sight of, suddenly meets us again at the end of the century, as a wide and majestic stream. But its waters were already mixed with blood; and the heathen, who had learnt under Nero to find amusement in persecution, had leisure during these thirty years to reduce their cruel pastime to a system. The Gnostics also were unceasingly active during the same period; and one reason why their history is involved in such obscurity, may be traced to the fact of their rising into notice in that part of the first century of which so little is known. The apostles, before their death, had predicted the success of these insidious teachers; and when we come to the beginning of the second century, we find their predictions abundantly fulfilled; so that this dark period was memorable, not only for the commencement of persecution, but for the spreading of an evil which was perhaps more fatal to the Church, by seducing the souls of men, and turning them from the truth of the Gospel to the ravings of the Gnostics.

One fact is, however, strikingly conspicuous in the midst of the obscurity of this eventful period. Christianity was beset on all sides by obstacles and impediments, and scarcely a single circumstance, humanly speaking, could be said to favour its propagation; and yet we find it, at the beginning of the second century, so widely diffused, and so deeply rooted, that from this time it was able to sustain a warfare against the whole force of the Roman empire, and finally to win the victory. We know therefore, that for the last thirty years it must have been constantly gaining ground, though we have not the materials for marking the details of its progress: and we can only say, when we see so prodigious an effect arising from so small a beginning, *This is the Lord's doing: it is marvellous in our eyes.*

THE EPISTLE OF ST BARNABAS

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THE obvious question which meets us at the outset is, whether this Epistle is, or is not, the work of the Apostle of whom we read in the Acts of the Apostles. We know that he was chosen by God to introduce the newly-converted Saul to the Church at Jerusalem, and that the two friends went together on St Paul's first great missionary journey. They were present together at the Council of Jerusalem, and rehearsed before the brethren what had been done among the Gentiles by their instrumentality. They were about to start on a second journey together when a cause of variance arose, the result of which was that they went different ways; and from that time Barnabas disappears from the sacred history. The expression which is used in the account of the parting, that St Paul was commended by the brethren to the grace of God, may probably imply that they sided with him against Barnabas in the dispute; and the expressions of St Paul in the Epistle to the Galatians lead us to suppose it possible that Barnabas did not possess the thoroughness of purpose and determination which characterised the great Apostle of the Gentiles.

Some early traditions make him to have preached in Milan; others, at Rome. Is the Epistle before us his?

External evidence certainly replies in the affirmative. St Clement of Alexandria and Origen, both writers of the second century, call it his. Eusebius and Jerome both speak of it as by him, though they do not hold it to be canonical—in other words, they regard it as a genuine work of the Apostle, but do not hold it to be inspired. The early Church, as we believe, was guided by the Holy Spirit to put its hand upon the books which are to be reckoned as Holy Scripture, and to leave out

of the Canon other books,—there were a great number,—which, however profitable in their way, were not to receive the honour of being reckoned as guides to faith. The New Testament consists either of writings of Apostles, or of companions of Apostles writing under their direction, as Mark under St Peter, and Luke under St Paul. Now we know that Barnabas is called an Apostle in the Acts, but it does not appear that he had the same authority as the Twelve, or as St Paul; and the very fact of his having separated from St Paul would certainly go far to derogate from his authority.

The internal evidence as to authorship is not free from difficulty. Portions of this Epistle are, to our minds, puerile and worthless. But they would not necessarily seem so to a Jew who loved to find a meaning in mystic numbers in his Law, nor to an Alexandrian given to allegorise the Old Testament. Origen and Clement of Alexandria, neither of them contemptible critics, make no objection to the Epistle on this ground; for after we have made allowance for these orientalisms, there is a living faith discernible, a firm grasp upon the great truths of Christianity as they are contained in the writings of the inspired Apostles. That along with its weakness there is also great spiritual beauty and occasional eloquence, will be seen when the Epistle itself is examined. The writer is very severe upon Judaism. He probably learned this under the tuition of St Paul. It is true that the latter says that Barnabas was once carried away by the dissimulation of the Judaising party (Gal. ii. 13), but his sorrow at this, and the consciousness that when he parted from St Paul he had lost a dear friend, may have embittered him all the more against the corrupters and opponents of Christian liberty.

Evidently the Epistle was written after the fall of Jerusalem; probably not long after. His special purpose seems to have been to exhort the Jews to cast away the shreds and tatters of their ancient ritual, and to call upon the world to recognise that God's covenant belongs not to the Jews, but to all Christians. In arguing out this he goes so far as to maintain that external Judaism had never received Divine sanction, and that the whole Old Testament worship had no meaning and no value except in Christ. But it will be well to quote Archbishop Wake fully on this subject. "His Epistle seems manifestly to have been designed for the benefit of the Jews; and

to show how all the parts of their law had a farther spiritual meaning than what at first sight appeared, and were designed to lead them to the faith and piety of the Gospel.

"In this exercise, therefore, he most likely spent his life; and, if we may credit the relation of this monk in Surius who writes the acts of this holy Evangelist, at last suffered martyrdom in the prosecution of it: being, at the instigation of certain Jews that came from Syria to Salamis, shut up in a synagogue where he was disputing with them, and at night stoned by them. What truth there is in this story, I cannot tell; but this I must observe, which even Baronius himself is forced to acknowledge, that there is nothing of this kind to be met with in any ancient author; nor does either Eusebius or St Jerome, where they treat expressly of this holy man, so much as once give the title of martyr to him.

"But whatever were the manner of St. Barnabas's death, yet famous is the story of the invention of his relics, delivered by the same monk; who, as Baronius tells us, lived at the same time under Zeno the emperor; and confirmed by the concurrent testimonies of Theodorus, Nicephorus, Cedrenus, Sigebert, Marianus Scotus, and others. With what ceremony this was performed, and how this blessed saint appeared twice to Anthemius, then bishop of Salamis, in order to the discovery of his own relics; and how the emperor commanded a stately church to be built over the place of his burial, I shall leave it to those who are fond of such stories, to read at large in Baronius, and the monk whom I have before mentioned. It will be of more concern to take notice, that Nilus Doxapater tells us that this very thing was the ground of the Cyprian privileges: where, speaking of certain provinces that depended not upon any of the greater patriarchates, he instances first of all in Cyprus; 'which,' says he, 'continues free, and is subject to none of the patriarchs, because of the apostle Barnabas being found in it.' And the same is the account which Nicephorus also gives us of it; and which was assigned before in the Notitia ascribed to Leo, as I find it quoted by Monsieur Le Moyne, in his preface to his late collection of several ancient pieces relating to ecclesiastical antiquity.

"Together with his body was found, says Alexander, the gospel of St Matthew, written in the Hebrew tongue, lying upon his breast; but Nilus says that of his kinsman St Mark. Which

of the two it was, or whether anything of all this was more than a mere story, contrived by Anthemius to get the better of Peter, patriarch of Antioch, I shall not undertake to determine. It is enough that we are assured that by this means he not only preserved his privileges against Peter, but got his see confirmed by the emperor as an independent see: which was also afterwards again done by Justinian, at the instigation of the empress Theodora, who was herself a Cyprian.

"But to return to that which is more properly the business of these reflections; it does not appear that St Barnabas left any more in writing than the Epistle I have here subjoined. Some indeed there were heretofore who thought that the Epistle to the Hebrews was written by him. Tertullian confidently quotes it as his: nor does St Hierome censure him for it, but leaves it as a doubt whether it should be ascribed to him, or to St Luke, St Clement, or St Paul: though he seems rather to incline to St Paul. But that this is a mistake, and that St Paul was indeed the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, has been very largely and learnedly proved by Dr Mills, in his Prolegomena to the New Testament, so as to put that matter beyond all doubt. As for the present Epistle, it is certain that several of the ancient fathers took it to be undoubtedly of St Barnabas's writing. Clemens Alexandrinus quotes it as such, both in his Stromata, yet extant, and in his lost books of Hypotyposes, as is remarked by Eusebius in his Ecclesiastical History. Origen calls it the catholic epistle of Barnabas, without the least intimation of any doubt about it, as he uses to give when he quoteth other apocryphal books; as those of Hermas, of which more hereafter. Others indeed of the fathers seem, if not to have denied that this Epistle was written by Barnabas the apostle, yet at least to have doubted of it. Eusebius reckons it among the scriptures of the New Testament which were received by some, and contradicted by others. St Jerome reckons it among the apocryphal books, which were not put into the canon of the Holy Scriptures, upon the account of the uncertainty of their authors, and consequently of their infallible authority.

"Which being so, I cannot but wonder at some in our own times, who without any better grounds peremptorily pronounce it to be none of St Barnabas's: whereas of the ancient ecclesiastical writers who lived much nearer the age

of our author, some positively affirmed it; and though some others doubted of it, yet none plainly denied it; at least, it does not appear that any did so. And of this Cotelerius seems to have been sensible; who though he did not care to ascribe it to the Barnabas of whom we are now discoursing, yet was forced to suppose that some other Barnabas wrote it; without which he saw there could be no way of answering the concurrent verdict of all antiquity, which was universally agreed in Barnabas as the author of it. But now who this other Barnabas was, or that in those times there was any such person, he pretends not to tell us; and they who ascribe it to Barnabas, expressly speak of him as the same of whom I have hitherto been discoursing.

"But of all others, most unaccountable is the fancy of Monsieur Le Moyne concerning the author of this epistle. He had observed that in several Greek manuscripts it was immediately continued on with that of St Polycarp; and from this he concludes the two epistles to have been written by St Polycarp; whereas in truth, by some chance in the copy from which the rest were transcribed, a few leaves were lost, containing the end of St Polycarp's and the beginning of St Barnabas's epistles; by which means the Greek of both is imperfect. But all the Latin copies constantly ascribing this letter to Barnabas, and the ancient fathers all agreeing to the same, utterly destroy this opinion; in which as he had none to go before him, so I believe he will scarcely meet with any to follow him.

"Nor are the arguments which they bring against the authority of it of such moment as to overthrow the constant testimonies of the ancients on its behalf. They tell us, first, that it is evident, from the sixteenth chapter of this epistle, that it was written after the destruction of Jerusalem. But why may not Barnabas have been then living, as well as we are sure St John, and several others of the companions of the apostles were? And if he may have been living after it, why shall not we suppose that he was, as well as they that he was not? seeing it does not appear from the testimony of any ancient writers when he died.

"But, secondly, they argue yet farther against it. 'For if this,' say they, 'be the genuine Epistle of St Barnabas, how comes it to pass that it is not received as canonical? Cer-

tainly, had the primitive Christians believed it to have been written by such a man, they would without controversy have placed it among the sacred writings, and not have censured it as of doubtful authority.' This is indeed a very specious pretence; but which, being a little examined, will be found to have no strength in it: it being certain that the primitive fathers did own this for St Barnabas's epistle, and yet not receive it into their canon; and therefore it does not follow, that had they believed it to have been his they must have esteemed it canonical.

"What rules they had, or by what measure they proceeded, in those first times, in judging of the canonical scriptures of the New Testament, it is not necessary for me here to inquire. It is enough that we know what books the church did at last agree in as coming under that character. And for the rest—as we cannot doubt that there was a due care taken in examining into a matter of such importance, and that those primitive fathers did not, without very good reason, distinguish those that were written by Divine inspiration from those that were not; so we are very sure that all was not admitted by them into the rank of canonical scripture that was written by any apostolical man; and therefore it can be no good argument that Barnabas was not the author of this epistle because it is not placed among the sacred writings of the New Testament.

"But there is yet one objection more, and that much insisted upon by those who are enemies to this epistle. They tell us it is full of a strange sort of allegorical interpretations of Holy Scripture; and therefore unworthy to be fathered upon so evangelical an author. And yet, notwithstanding this, we find Clemens Alexandrinus and Origen, Eusebius and St Jerome, (some of the greatest and most learned critics of those ages that were the nearest to the time in which it was written,) not doubting to ascribe it to St Barnabas, and to think it worthy too of such an author.

"I need not say how general a way this was of interpreting Scripture, in the time that St Barnabas lived; to omit Origen, who has been noted as excessive in it, and for whom yet a learned man has very lately made a reasonable apology, who has ever shown a more diffusive knowledge than Clemens Alexandrinus has done in all his composures? And yet in his

works we find the very same method taken of interpreting the Holy Scriptures; and that without any reproach either to his learning or to his judgment. What author has there been more generally applauded for his admirable piety than the other Clement? whose epistle to the Corinthians I have here inserted; and yet even in that plain piece, we meet with more than one instance of the same kind of interpretation, which was nevertheless admired by the best and most primitive Christians.

"Even St Paul himself, in his epistles received by us as canonical, affords not a few instances of this, which is so much found fault with in St Barnabas; as I might easily make appear, from a multitude of passages out of them, were it needful for myself on a point which every one who has read the Scriptures with any care cannot choose but have observed.

"Now that which makes it the less to be wondered at in St Barnabas is, that the Jews, of which number he himself was originally one, and to whom he wrote, had a long time been wholly addicted to this way of interpreting the law; and taught men to search out a spiritual meaning for almost all the ritual commands and ceremonies of it. This is plain from the account which Aristeas has left us of the rules which Eleazar the high priest, to whom Ptolemy sent for a copy of the Mosaical law, gave him for the understanding of it. When —it being objected to him, 'That their legislator seemed to have been too curious in little matters; such as the prohibition of meats and drinks, and the like, for which there appeared no just reason'—he showed him at large, 'That there was a farther hidden design in it than what at first sight appeared, and that these outward ordinances were but as so many cautions to them against such vices as were principally meant to be forbidden by them.' And then goes on to explain this part of the law, after the same manner that Barnabas has done, in the following epistle.

"But this is not all: Eusebius gives us yet another instance, to confirm this to us; viz. of Aristobulus, who lived at the same time, and delivered the like spiritual meaning of the law, that Eleazar had done before. And that this was still continued among the Hellenistical Jews, is evident from the account that is left us by one of them, who was contemporary

with St Barnabas, and than whom none has been more famous for this way of writing; I mean Philo, in his description of the Therapeutæ—whether the same whom in the beginning of his book he calls by the name of Essenes, as Scaliger supposes; or a particular sect of Jews, as Valesius will have it; or, lastly, as a kind of monkish converts from Judaism to Christianity, as Eusebius heretofore described them, and as some other learned men seem rather to conjecture. But, whatever becomes of this, herein they all agree that they were originally Jews; and therefore we may be sure that they followed the same method of interpreting the Scripture that the Alexandrian Jews were wont to do.

"Now the account which Eusebius, from Philo, gives us of them, is this. 'Their leaders,' says he, 'left them many ancient writings of their notions, clothed in allegories.' And again: 'They interpret the Holy Scriptures, viz. of the Old Testament, allegorically. For you must know,' continues he, 'that they liken the law to an animal; the words of which make up the body, but the hidden sense which lies under them, and is not seen, that they think to be the soul of it.' And this was that which a late learned author supposes rendered their conversion to Christianity more easy. For, being wont to seek out the spiritual meaning of the law, they more readily embraced the Gospel than those who looked no farther than the outward letter, and were therefore the harder to be persuaded to come over to so spiritual an institution.

"It was from hence, I suppose, that the most early heretics were so wedded to their mystical interpretations of scripture, and so much valued themselves upon the account of them: against whose false and impure doctrines our late great critic, Dr Hammond, supposes St Barnabas to have principally designed his epistle; and therefore, that, being to deal with men who valued nothing but such kind of expositions, he was forced to confute them in their own way; both as most suitable to their manners, and most proper either to convince them of their errors, or at least to prevent others, especially the Jewish converts, from falling into them.

"But whether this were so or not, this much is evident from what has been said: that the Hellenistical Jews, to whom it is most probable St Barnabas addressed his epistle, were altogether used to this way of interpreting the Holy Scriptures: and

therefore, that howsoever it may appear to us, who are so utterly unaccustomed to it, yet we ought not to wonder that St Barnabas, who was himself a Jew, should at such time, and upon such an occasion as this, make use of it, or suppose it at all unworthy of him so to do.

"Nor indeed were they the Jews only that led the holy men in those days into these mystical expositions of the Sacred Scriptures. Even the Gentile philosophers conduced towards it: whilst the better to cover over the fabulous stories of their gods, which they saw were too ridiculous to be maintained, they explained the whole system of their idolatry by allegorical analogies, and showed all the poetical accounts of them to be only the outside shadows of a sort of natural theology included under those fictions. Thus Heraclides of Pontus wrote a whole book of the allegories of Homer; and Metrodorus of Lampsacus is fallen foul upon by Tatian, in his Oration against the Greeks, for pretending that neither Juno, nor Minerva, nor Jupiter, were what those imagined who built temples and altars to them, *Φύσεως δὲ ὑποστάσεις καὶ στοιχείων διακοσμήσεις.* Nay, so far went this last author in his allegories, as to turn all the Trojan and Grecian heroes into mere fictions; and to make Hector, and Achilles, and Agamemnon, and even Helena herself, nothing less than what one would think they were, and what the common people ignorantly imagined them to be.

"And for the influence which this had upon the ancient fathers, who from philosophers became Christians, the writings both of Justin Martyr, and Clemens Alexandrinus sufficiently show. And if we may believe Porphyry, an enemy, in the case of Origen, he tells us, in the same place in which he complains of him, 'for turning those things that were clearly delivered by Moses, into mystical significations,'—not only that he did this in imitation of the Grecians, but that it was from his frequent conversation with Numenius and Cronius, Moderatus, Nicomachus, and others among the Pythagoreans, and with Chæremon and Cornutus among the Stoics, that he had learnt his allegorical way of expounding the Holy Scriptures; and applied that to his religion which they were wont to do to their superstition.

"From all which it appears, that this way of writing, in matters of religion, was in those days generally used, not only

among the Jews, but among the wiser and more philosophical of the Gentiles too; and from both came to be almost universally practised among the primitive Christians; which being so, we ought to be far from censuring of St Barnabas for his mystical application of what God prescribed to the Jews in the Old Testament, to the spiritual accomplishment of it in the New. Much less should we ever the more call in question either the truth or credit of his epistle upon this account.

"Having said thus much either in vindication of the allegorical expositions of this epistle, or at least by way of apology for them, I shall add but little more concerning the epistle itself. I have before observed, as to the time of its writing, that it was somewhat after the destruction of Jerusalem; and as we may conjecture from the subject of it (for title at present it has none, nor does it appear that it ever had any), was addressed to the Jews, to draw them off from the letter of the law, to a spiritual understanding of it; and by that means dispose them to embrace the Gospel. Whether he had, besides this, a farther design in it, as Dr Hammond supposes, to confute the errors of the Gnostic heretics, and to prevent the Jewish converts from falling into them, it is not certain, but may, from the chief points insisted upon by him, be probably enough supposed. If any one shall think it strange that, disputing against the Jews for the truth of the Gospel, he should not have urged any of those passages relating to the Messiah, which seem to us the most apposite to such a purpose,—such as the oracle of Jacob concerning the time that Shiloh was to come; the seventy weeks of Daniel; the prophecies of Haggai and Malachi; of his coming while the second temple stood, and which was now destroyed when he wrote this epistle; and the like: Monsieur Le Moyne will give him a ready answer, viz. that these passages relate chiefly to the time of Christ's appearing, and that this was no controversy in these days: the Jews not only confessing it, but being ready at every turn, through this persuasion, to set up some one or other for their Messiah, to their shame and confusion: it was therefore, then, but little necessary to use those arguments against them, which now appear to be the most proper and convincing. Since the state of the question has been altered, and the Jews deny either that their Messiah is come, or that it was necessary for

him to have come about the time that our Saviour Christ appeared in the flesh.

"But though the chief design of this epistle was to convince the Jews of the truth of our religion, yet are there not wanting in the latter part of it many excellent rules, to render it still very useful to the pious reader. Indeed some have doubted whether this did originally belong to this epistle, or whether it has not since been added to it. But seeing we find this part quoted by the fathers as belonging to St Barnabas, no less than the other,—and that the measure assigned to it, in the ancient Stichometries, can hardly be well accounted for without it,—I do not see but that we ought to conclude, that our author did divide his epistle into the two parts in which we now have it; and that this latter, as well as the former, was written by him.

"As for the translation which I have here given of it, I have made it up out of what remains of the original Greek, and of the old Latin version; and of each of which, though a part be lost, yet it has so fallen out, that between them we not only have the whole epistle, but that too, free of those interpolations which Vossius tells us some had endeavoured to make in this, as well as in Ignatius's epistles. The passages of Holy Scripture which are here quoted according to the Septuagint, I have chosen rather to set down as they are in our English Bible, than to amuse the common reader with a new translation of them. Upon the whole, I have endeavoured to attain to the sense of my author, and to make him as plain and easy as I was able. If in any thing I shall have chanced to mistake him, I have only this to say for myself, that he must be better acquainted with the road than I pretend to be, who will undertake to travel so long a journey in the dark, and never to miss his way."

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THE CATHOLIC EPISTLE OF ST BARNABAS.

I. ALL happiness to you, my sons and daughters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who loved us, in peace.

Having perceived abundance of knowledge of the great and excellent laws of God to be in you, I exceedingly rejoice in your blessed and admirable souls, because ye have so worthily received the grace which was grafted in you. For which cause, I am full of joy, hoping the rather to be saved; inasmuch as I truly see a spirit infused into you, from the pure fountain of God. Having this persuasion, and being fully convinced thereof, because that since I have begun to speak unto you, I have had a more than ordinary good success in the way of the law of the Lord, which is in Christ. For which cause, brethren, I also think, verily, that I love you above my own soul; because that therein dwelleth the greatness of faith and charity, as also the hope of that life which is to come. Wherefore considering this, that if I shall take care to communicate to you a part of what I have received, it shall turn to my reward that I have served such good souls, I gave diligence to write in a few words unto you, that together with your faith, your knowledge also may be perfect. There are, therefore, three things ordained by the Lord—the hope of life, the beginning, and the completion of it. For the Lord hath both declared unto us, by the prophets, those things that are past, and opened to us the beginnings of those that are to come. Wherefore, it will behove us, as He has spoken, to come more holily and nearer to His altar. I there-

fore, not as a teacher, but as one of you, will endeavour to lay before you a few things by which you may, on many accounts, become the more joyful.

II. Seeing, then, the days are exceeding evil, and the adversary has got the power of this present world, we ought to give the more diligence to inquire into the righteous judgments of the Lord. Now the assistants of our faith are, fear and patience; our fellow-combatants, long-suffering and continence. Whilst these remain pure in what relates unto the Lord, wisdom, and understanding, and science, and knowledge, rejoiced together with them. For God has manifested to us, by all the prophets, that He has no occasion for our sacrifices, or burnt-offerings, or oblations; saying thus: "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto Me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of he-goats. When ye come to appear before Me, who hath required this at your hands? Ye shall no more tread My courts. Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto Me: your new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts, My soul hateth."[1] These things, therefore, hath God abolished, that the new law of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is without the yoke of any such necessity, might have the spiritual offering of men themselves. For so the Lord saith again to those heretofore,[2] "Did I at all command your fathers, when they came out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices: but this I commanded them, saying, Let[3] none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour, and love no false oath." Forasmuch then as we are not without understanding, we ought to apprehend the designs of our merciful Father. For He speaks to us, being willing that we, who have been in the same error about the sacrifices, should seek and find how to approach unto Him. And therefore He thus bespeaks us—"The sacrifice of God [is a broken spirit], a broken and contrite heart God will not despise."[4] Wherefore, brethren, we ought the more diligently to inquire after those things that belong to our salvation, that the adversary

[1] Isaiah i. 11-14. [2] Jer. vii. 22, 23. [3] Zech. viii. 17. [4] Psal. l. 19.

may not have any entrance into us, and deprive us of our spiritual life.

III. Wherefore He again speaketh to them concerning these things: "Ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high. Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head like a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord?" But to us He saith on this wise: "Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free; and that ye break every yoke? is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thy health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee, the glory of the Lord shall be thy rereward. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and He shall say, Here I am; if thou put away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity: and if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul."[1] In this therefore, brethren, God has manifested His foreknowledge and mercy to us; because the people which He has purchased to His beloved Son were to believe in sincerity; and therefore He has shown these things to all of us, that we shall not run as proselytes to the Jewish Law.

IV. Wherefore is it necessary that, searching diligently into those things which are near to come to pass, we should write to you what may serve to keep you whole. To which end, let us flee from every evil work, and hate the errors of the present time, that we may be happy in that which is to come. Let us not give ourselves the liberty of disputing with the wicked and sinners, lest we should chance in time to become like unto them. "For the consummation of sin is come," as it is written, as the prophet Daniel says.[2] And for this end the Lord hath shortened the times and the days, that His beloved might hasten His coming to His inheritance. For so the prophet speaks,—"There shall ten kings reign in the earth;

[1] Isaiah lviii. 4-10. [2] Dan. ix.

and there shall rise, last of all, another little one, and he shall humble three kings." And again, Daniel speaks in like manner concerning the kingdoms,—"And I saw the fourth beast dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns; and behold there came up among them another little horn, before which were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots."[1] We ought, therefore, to understand this also: and I beseech you, as one of your own brethren, loving you all beyond my own life, that you look well to yourselves, and be not like those who add sin to sin, and say, "that their covenant is ours also." Nay, but it is ours only; for they have for ever lost that which Moses received. For thus saith the Scripture: "And Moses continued fasting forty days and forty nights in the mount; and he received the covenant from the Lord, even two tables of stone written by the hand of God."[2] But having turned themselves to idols, they lost it; as the Lord also said unto Moses, "Moses, go down quickly, for thy people which thou hast brought forth out of Egypt, have corrupted themselves, and turned aside from the way which I commanded them. And Moses, cast the two tables out of his hands,"[3] —and their covenant was broken, that the love of Jesus might be sealed in your hearts, unto the hope of His faith. Wherefore let us give heed unto the last times. For all the time past of our life and our faith will profit us nothing, unless we continue to hate what is evil, and to withstand the future temptations. So the Son of God tells us, "Let us resist all iniquity and hate it." Wherefore consider the works of the evil way. Do not withdraw yourselves from others, as if you were already justified; but coming all together into one place, inquire what is agreeable to, and profitable for the beloved of God. For the Scripture saith, "Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight."[4] Let us become spiritual, a perfect temple to God. As much as in us lies, let us meditate upon the fear of God; and strive, to the utmost of our power, to keep His commandments, that we may rejoice in His righteous judgments. For God will judge the world without respect of

[1] Dan. vii. 7, 8.
[2] Exod. xxxi. xxxiv.
[3] Exod. xxxii. 7, 19; Deut. ix. 12, 17.
[4] Isa. v 21.

persons; and every one shall receive according to his works. If a man shall be good, his righteousness shall go before him; if wicked, the reward of his wickedness shall follow him. Take heed, therefore, lest sitting still, now that we are called, we fall asleep in our sins; and the wicked one, getting the dominion over us, stir us up, and shut us out of the kingdom of the Lord.[1] Consider this also: although you have seen so great signs and wonders done among the people of the Jews, yet (this notwithstanding) the Lord hath forsaken them. Beware therefore, lest it happen to us as it is written, "There be many called, but few chosen."[2]

V. For this cause did our Lord vouchsafe to give up His body to destruction, that through the forgiveness of our sins we might be sanctified; that is, by the sprinkling of His blood. Now for what concerns the things that are written about Him—some belong to the people of the Jews, and some to us. For thus saith the Scripture, "He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities; and by His blood we are healed. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before His shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth."[3] Wherefore we ought the more to give thanks unto God, for that He hath both declared unto us what is passed, and not suffered us to be without understanding of those things that are to come. But to them He saith, "The nets are not unjustly spread for the birds."[4] This He spake, because a man will justly perish, if having the knowledge of the way of truth, He shall nevertheless not refrain Himself from the way of darkness. And for this cause the Lord was content to suffer for our souls, although He be the Lord of the whole earth; to whom God said before the beginning of the world, "Let us make man after our own image and likeness."[5] Now, how He suffered for us, seeing it was by men that He underwent it, I will show you. The prophets, having received from Him the gift of prophecy, spake before concerning Him; but He, that He might abolish death, and make known the resurrection from the dead, was content, as it was necessary to appear in the flesh, that He might make good the promise before given to our fathers; and preparing Himself a new people, might demonstrate to them, whilst He

[1] Matt. xxv. 5-10. [2] Matt. xxii. 14. [3] Isa. liii. 5, 7.
[4] Prov. i. 17. [5] Gen. i. 26.

was upon earth, that after the resurrection He would judge the world. And finally, teaching the people of Israel, and doing many wonders and signs among them, He preached to them, and showed the exceeding great love which he bare towards them. And when He chose His apostles, which were afterwards to publish His gospel, He took men who had been very great sinners; that thereby he might plainly show, "That He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."[1] Then He clearly manifested Himself to be the Son of God. For had He not come in the flesh, how could men have been able to look upon Him that they might be saved? seeing if they behold only the sun, which was the work of His hands, and shall hereafter cease to be, they are not able to endure steadfastly to look against the rays of it. Wherefore the Son of God came in the flesh from this cause, that He might fill up the measure of their iniquity who have persecuted His prophets unto death. And for the same reason also He suffered; for God hath said, "of the stripes of His flesh, that they were from them." And, "I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered."[2] Thus He would suffer, because it behoved him to suffer upon the cross. For thus one saith, prophesying concerning him, "Spare my soul from the sword."[3] And again, "Pierce my flesh from Thy fear."[4] And again, "The congregation of wicked doers rose up against Me [they have pierced My hands and My feet.]"[5] And again, He saith, "I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheeks to be buffeted, and My face I set as an hard rock."[6]

VI. And when He had fulfilled the commandment of God, what says He? "Who will contend with me? Let him stand against Me; or who is he that will implead Me? Let him draw near to the servant of the Lord. Woe be to you! Because ye shall all wax old as a garment, the moth shall eat you up."[7] And again the prophet adds, "He is put for a stone of stumbling. Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a

[1] Matt. ix. 14. [2] Zech. xiii. 6, 7.

[3] According to the LXX. Psalm xxii. 20; cxviii. [cxix. *Heb.*] 120; xxii. 16.

[4] These words were doubtless cited thus by Barnabas, because that without them, those foregoing do not prove the crucifixion of Christ. But through the repetition of the same preposition, this latter part was so early omitted, that it was not in the Latin interpreter's copy.

[5] Psal. xxii. 16. [6] Isa. l. 6. [7] Isa. l. 8, 9.

precious stone, a choice corner-stone, an honourable stone."[1] And what follows? "And he that hopeth in Him shall live for ever." What then? Is our hope built upon a stone? God forbid. But because the Lord hath hardened His flesh against suffering, He saith, "I have put me as a firm rock."[2] And again the prophet adds, "The stone which the builders refused is become the head of the corner."[3] And again he saith, "This is the great and wonderful day which the Lord hath made."[4] [I write these things the more plainly to you that ye may understand.] For, indeed, I could be content even to die for your sakes. But what saith the prophet again? "The counsel of the wicked encompassed me about. They came about me, as bees about the honeycomb;" and, "upon my vesture they cast lots."[5] Forasmuch then as our Saviour was to appear in the flesh, and suffer, His passion was hereby foretold. For thus saith the prophet against Israel, "Woe be to their soul, because they have taken wicked counsel against themselves, saying, Let us lay snares for the righteous, because he is unprofitable to us."[6] Moses also in like manner speaketh to them; "Behold, thus saith the Lord God, enter ye into the good land of which the Lord hath sworn to Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, that he would give it you, and possess it; a land flowing with milk and honey."[7] Now what the spiritual meaning of this is, learn. It is as if it had been said, put your trust in Jesus, who shall be manifested to you in the flesh. For man is the earth which suffers; forasmuch as out of the substance of the earth Adam was formed. What, therefore, does he mean when he says, "Into a good land flowing with milk and honey"? Blessed be our Lord, who has given us wisdom, and a heart to understand His secrets! For so says the prophet, "Who shall understand the hard sayings of the Lord but he that is wise, and intelligent, and that loves his Lord?"[8] Seeing, therefore, he has renewed us by the remission of our sins, he has put us into another frame, that we should have souls like those of children, forming us again Himself by the Spirit. For thus the scripture saith concerning us, where it introduceth the

[1] Isa. viii. 14; xxviii. 16.
[2] Isa. l. 7.
[3] Psal. cxvii. 22.
[4] Psal. cxvii. 24.
[5] Psal. xxi. 17; cxvii. 12; xxi. 19.
[6] Isa. iii. 9.
[7] Exod. xxxiii. 1, 3.
[8] Hosea xiv.; Prov. i. 6; Eccl. i. 10.

Father speaking to the Son; "Let us make man after our likeness and similitude; and let them have dominion over the beasts of the earth, and over the fowls of the air, and over the fish of the sea."[1] And when the Lord saw the man which he had formed, that behold he was very good, he said, "Increase, and multiply, and replenish the earth."[2] And this He spake to His Son. I will now show you how he made us a new creature in the latter days. The Lord saith, "Behold, I will make the last as the first."[3] Wherefore the prophet thus spake,—"Enter into the land flowing with milk and honey, and have dominion over it."[4] Wherefore ye see how we are again formed anew; as also He speaks by another prophet,—"Behold, saith the Lord, I will take from them (that is, from those whom the Spirit of the Lord foresaw) their hearts of stone, and I will put into them hearts of flesh;"[5] because he was about to be made manifest in the flesh, and to dwell in us. For, my brethren, the habitation of our heart is a holy temple[6] unto the Lord. For the Lord saith again, "In what place shall I appear before the Lord my God, and be glorified?" He answers, "I will confess unto thee in the congregation in the midst of my brethren; and will sing unto thee in the church of the saints."[7] Wherefore we are they whom He has brought into that good land. But[8] what signifies the milk and honey? Because as the child is nourished first with milk, and then with honey, so we, being kept alive by the belief of His promises and His word, shall live and have dominion over the land. For He foretold above, saying, "Increase, and multiply, and have dominion over the fishes," &c. But who is there that is now able to have this dominion over the wild beasts, or fishes, or fowls of the air? For you know that to rule is to have power—that a man should be set over what he rules. But forasmuch as this we have not now, He tells us when we shall have it; namely, when we shall become perfect, that we may be made inheritors of the covenant of the Lord.

VII. Understand then, my beloved children, that the good

[1] Gen. i. 26. Comp. Coloss. iii. 10.
[2] Gen. i. 28.
[3] Isa. xliii. 18, 19; Matt. xx. 16.
[4] Comp. Heb. iii.
[5] Ezek. xi. 19; xxxvi. 26.
[6] So St Paul, 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17; vi. 19.
[7] Psalm xli. 3; xxi. 23.
[8] Comp. Hier. in Jer. xxxii. 22; et in Jer. xi. 5. Add. 1 Pet. ii. 2.

God hath before manifested all things unto us, that we might know to whom we ought always to give thanks and praise. If, therefore, the Son of God, who is the Lord of all, and shall come to judge both the quick and the dead, hath suffered, that by His stripes we might live, let us believe that the Son of God could not have suffered but for us. But, being crucified, they gave Him vinegar and gall to drink. Hear, therefore, how the priests of the temple did foreshow this also: The Lord, by His command which was written, declared, that whosoever did not fast the appointed fast he should die the death:[1] because He also was Himself one day to offer up His body for our sins; that so the type of what was done in Isaac[2] might be fulfilled, who was offered upon the altar. What, therefore, is it that He says by the prophet? "And let them eat of the goat which is offered in the day of the fast for all their sins."[3] Hearken diligently [my brethren]. "And all the priests, and they only, shall eat the inwards, not washed with vinegar." Why so? Because I know that when I shall hereafter offer my flesh for the sins of a new people, ye will give Me vinegar to drink, mixed with gall; therefore do ye only eat, the people fasting the while, and lamenting in sackcloth and ashes. And that He might foreshow that He was to suffer for them, hear then how He appointed it:—"Take," says He, "two goats, fair and alike, and offer them; and let the high priest take one of them for a burnt-offering."[4] And what must be done with the other? "Let it," says He, "be accursed." Consider how exactly this appears to have been a type of Jesus. "And let the congregation spit upon it, and prick it; and put the scarlet wool about its head: and thus let it be carried forth into the wilderness." And this being done, he that was appointed to convey the goat, led it into the wilderness, and took away the scarlet wool, and put it upon a thorn bush, whose young sprouts, when we find them in the field, we are wont to eat: so the fruit of that thorn only is sweet. And to what end was this ceremony? Consider—one was offered upon the altar, the other was accursed. And why was that which was accursed, crowned? Because they shall see Christ in that day, having a scarlet garment about his body, and shall say, Is not this He whom we crucified, having despised Him, pierced Him, mocked

[1] Levit. xxiii. 29. [2] Gen. xx. [3] Numb. xxix. &c. [4] Levit. xvi.

Him? Certainly this is He who then said that He was the Son of God.[1] As, therefore, He shall be then like to what He was on earth, so were the Jews heretofore commanded *to take two goats, fair and equal.* That when they shall see [our Saviour] hereafter coming [in the clouds of heaven], they may be amazed at the likeness of the goats. Wherefore ye here again see a type of Jesus who was to suffer for us. But what then signifies this, that the wool was to be put into the midst of the thorns? This also is a figure of Jesus, set out to the Church. For as He who would take away the scarlet wool must undergo many difficulties, because that thorn was very sharp, and with difficulty get it; so they, says Christ, that will see Me, and come to My kingdom, must through many afflictions and troubles attain unto Me.[2]

VIII. But what type[3] do ye suppose it to have been, where it is commanded to the people of Israel, that grown persons, in whom sins are come to perfection, should offer a heifer, and after they had killed it, should burn the same: but then young men should take up the ashes and put them in vessels, and tie a piece of scarlet wool and hyssop upon a stick, and so the young men should sprinkle every one of the people, and they should be clear from their sins? Consider how all these are delivered in a figure to us. This heifer is Jesus Christ; the wicked men that were to offer it, are those sinners who brought Him to death; who afterwards have no more to do with it: the sinners have no more the honour of handling of it; but the young men who performed the sprinkling, signified those who preach to us the forgiveness of sins, and the purification of the heart; to whom the Lord gave authority to preach His gospel: being at the beginning twelve, to signify the tribes, because there were twelve tribes of Israel. But why were there three young men appointed to sprinkle? To denote Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, because they were great before God. And why was the wool put upon a stick? Because the kingdom of Jesus was founded upon the cross; and therefore they that put their trust in Him shall live for ever. But why was the wool and hyssop put together? To signify that in the kingdom of Christ there shall be evil and filthy days, in which, however, we shall be saved; and because he that has any disease in

[1] The Greek is imperfect. [2] See Acts xiv. 22. [3] Num. xix.

the flesh by some filthy humours, is cured by hyssop. Wherefore these things being thus done, are to us indeed evident; but to the Jews they are obscure, because they hearkened not unto the voice of the Lord.

IX. And therefore the Scripture again speaks concerning our ears, that God has circumcised them, together with our hearts. For thus saith the Lord by the holy prophet: "By the hearing of the ear they obeyed me."[1] And again, "They who are afar off, shall hear and understand what things I have done."[2] And again, "Circumcise your hearts, saith the Lord."[3] And again He saith, "Hear, O Israel! For thus saith the Lord thy God."[4] And again the Spirit of God prophesieth, saying,[5] "Who is there that would live for ever, let him hear the voice of my song."[6] And again, "Hear, O heaven, and give ear, O earth! Because the Lord has spoken[7] these things for a witness." And again He saith, "Hear the word of the Lord, ye princes of the people."[8] And again, "Hear, O children! the voice of one crying in the wilderness."[9] Wherefore He has circumcised our ears, that we should hear His word, and believe. But as for that circumcision in which the Jews trust, it is abolished. For the circumcision of which God spake was not of the flesh: but they have transgressed His commands, because the evil one hath deceived them. For thus God bespeaks them: "Thus saith the Lord your God, [Here I find the new law] Sow not among thorns; but circumcise yourselves to the Lord your God."[10] And what doth He mean by this saying? Hearken unto your Lord. And again He saith, "Circumcise the hardness of your hearts, and harden not your neck."[11] And again, "Behold saith the Lord, all the nations are circumcised [they have not lost their foreskin;] but this people is uncircumcised in heart."[12] But you will say the Jews were circumcised for a sign. And so are all the Syrians, and Arabians, and all the idolatrous priests: but are they, therefore, of the covenant of Israel? And even the Egyptians themselves are circumcised. Understand, therefore, children, these things more fully, that Abraham, who was the first that brought in

[1] Septuag. Psal. xvii. 45.
[2] Isa. xxxiii. 13.
[3] Jer. iv. 4.
[4] Jer. vii. 2.
[5] Psalm xxxiii., xxxiv.
[6] Isa. l. 10,
[7] Isa. i. 2.
[8] Ib. 10.
[9] Isa. xl. 3.
[10] Jer. iv. 3, 4.
[11] Jer. iv. 4.
[12] Deuter. x. 16.

circumcision, looking forward in the Spirit to Jesus, circumcised, having received the mystery of three letters. For the Scripture says, that Abraham circumcised three hundred and eighteen men of his house. But what, therefore, was the mystery that was made known unto him? Mark, first, the eighteen, and next the three hundred. For the numeral letters of ten and eight are I H. And these denote Jesus. And because the cross was that by which we were to find grace, therefore he adds three hundred, the note of which is T [the figure of His cross]. Wherefore, by two letters, he signified Jesus; and by the third, His cross. He who has put the engrafted gift of His doctrine within us, knows that I never taught to anyone a more certain truth: but I trust that ye are worthy of it.

X. But why did Moses say, "Ye shall not eat of the swine; neither the eagle, nor the hawk, nor the crow; nor any fish that has not a scale upon him"? I answer, that in the spiritual sense, he comprehended three doctrines that were to be gathered from hence. Besides which he says to them in the book of Deuteronomy, "And I will give My statutes unto this people."[1] Wherefore it is not the command of God, that they should not eat these things; but Moses in the Spirit spake to them. Now the sow he forbad them to eat, meaning thus much: Thou shalt not join thyself to such persons as are like unto swine; who whilst they live in pleasure, forget their God,—but when any want pinches them, then they know the Lord; as the sow when she is full, knows not her master; but when she is hungry, she makes a noise, and being again fed, is silent. "Neither," says he, "shalt thou eat the eagle, nor the hawk, nor the kite, nor the crow;" that is, Thou shalt not keep company with such kind of men as know not how, by their labour and sweat, to get themselves food: but injuriously ravish away the things of others, and watch how to lay snares for them; when at the same time they appear to live in perfect innocence. [So these birds alone seek no food for themselves, but] sitting idle, seek how they may eat of the flesh which others have provided; being destructive through their wickedness. "Neither," says he, "shalt thou eat the lamprey, nor the polypus, nor the cuttle-fish;" that is, Thou shalt not be like such men, by using to converse with them, who are alto-

[1] Deut. iv.

gether wicked and adjudged to death. For so those fishes are alone accursed, and wallow in the mire, nor swim as other fishes, but tumble in the dirt, at the bottom of the deep. But he adds, "Neither shalt thou eat of the hare." To what end? To signify this to us: Thou shalt not be an adulterer; nor liken thyself to such persons. For the hare every year multiplies the places of its conception; and as many years as it lives, so many it has. "Neither shalt thou eat of the hyæna;" that is, again, be not an adulterer, nor a corrupter of others; neither be like to such. And wherefore so? Because that creature every year changes its kind, and is sometimes male and sometimes female. For which cause also he justly hated the weasel; to the end that they should not be like such persons who with their mouths commit wickedness, by reason of their uncleanness; nor join themselves with those impure women, who with their mouths commit wickedness. Because that animal conceives with its mouth. Moses, therefore, speaking as concerning meats, delivered, indeed, three great precepts to them, in the spiritual signification of those commands; but they, according to the desires of the flesh, understood him as if he had only meant it of meats. And therefore David took aright the knowledge of his threefold command, saying, in like manner, "Blessed is the man that hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly;"[1] as the fishes before-mentioned, in the bottom of the deep, in darkness; nor stood in the way of sinners, as they who seem to fear the Lord, but yet sin, as the sow. And hath not sat in the seat of the scorners, as those birds who sit and watch that they may devour. Here you have the law concerning meat perfectly set forth, and according to the true knowledge of it. But says Moses, "Ye shall eat all that divideth the hoof, and cheweth the cud;" signifying thereby such an one as having taken his food, knows him that nourisheth him; and resting upon him, rejoiceth in him. And in this he spake well, having respect to the commandment. What therefore is it that he says? That we should hold fast to them that fear the Lord—with those who meditate on the command of the word which they have received in their heart—with those that declare the righteous judgments of the Lord, and keep His commandments; in short, with those who know that to meditate is a work of pleasure, and therefore exercise

[1] Psalm i. 1.

themselves in the word of the Lord. But why might they eat those that clave the hoof? Because the righteous liveth in this present world; but his expectation is fixed upon the other. See, brethren, how admirably Moses commanded these things. But how should we thus know all this, and understand it? We, therefore, understanding aright the commandments, speak as the Lord would have us. Wherefore he has circumcised our ears and our hearts, that we might know these things.

XI. Let us now inquire whether the Lord took care to manifest anything beforehand concerning *water* and the *cross*? Now for the former of these, it is written to the people of Israel, how they shall not receive that baptism which belongs to forgiveness of sins; but shall institute another to themselves that cannot. For thus saith the prophet; "Be astonished, O heaven! and let the earth tremble at it, because this people have done two great and wicked things: they left Me, the fountain of living water, and have digged for themselves broken cisterns, that can hold no water. Is My holy mountain, Zion,[1] a desolate wilderness? For ye shall be as a young bird when its nest is taken away."[2] And again the prophet saith, "I will go before thee, and will make plain the mountains, and will break the gates of brass, and will snap in sunder the bars of iron; and will give thee dark, and hidden, and invisible treasures, that they may know that I am the Lord God."[3] And again, "He shall dwell in the high den of the strong rock." And then what follows in the same prophet? "His water is faithful: ye shall see the King with glory, and your soul shall learn the fear of the Lord."[4] And again he saith, in another prophet, he that does these things "shall be like a tree planted by the currents of water, which shall give its fruit in its season. Its leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doth it shall prosper. As for the wicked it is not so with them; but they are as the dust which the wind scattereth away from the face of the earth. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, neither the sinners in the council of the righteous. For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, and the way of the ungodly shall perish."[5] Consider how He has joined both the cross and the water together. For this He saith, Blessed are they who, putting

[1] Isa. xvi. 1, 2. [2] Jer. ii. 12. [3] Isa. xlv. 2, 3.
[4] Isa. xxxiii. 16, 17. [5] Psal. i.

their trust in the cross, descend into the water ; for they shall have their reward in due time; then, saith He, will I give it to them. But as concerning the present time, He saith, their leaves shall not fall; meaning thereby that every word that shall go out of your mouth, shall, through faith and charity, be to the conversion and hope of many. In like manner does another prophet speak ; "And the land of Jacob was the praise of all the earth ;"[1] magnifying thereby the vessel of his spirit. And what follows? "And there was a river running on the right hand, and beautiful trees grew up by it ; and he that shall eat of them shall live for ever." The signification of which is this—That we go down into the water full of sins and pollutions, but come up again, bringing forth fruit ; having in our hearts the fear and hope which is in Jesus, by the Spirit. "And whosoever shall eat of them shall live for ever ;" that is, whosoever shall hearken to those who call them, and shall believe, shall live for ever.

XII. In like manner he determines concerning the cross of another prophet, saying, "And when shall these things be fulfilled?" The Lord answers, "When the tree that is fallen shall rise, and when blood shall drop down from the tree." Here you have again mention made, both of the cross, and of Him that was to be crucified upon it. And yet, farther, He saith by Moses (when Israel was fighting with, and beaten by, a strange people ; to the end that God might put them in mind how that for their sins they were delivered unto death ;) yea the Holy Spirit put it into the heart of Moses, to represent both the sign of the cross, and of Him that was to suffer ; that so they might know that if they did not believe in Him, they should be overcome for ever. Moses, therefore, piled up armour upon armour in the middle of a rising ground, and standing up high above all of them, stretched forth his arms ; and so Israel again conquered. But no sooner did he let down his hands, but they were again slain. And why so? To the end they might know, that except they trust in Him they cannot be saved And in another prophet he saith, "I have stretched out my hands all the day long to a people disobedient, and speaking against my righteous way."[2] And again Moses makes a type of Jesus to show that He was to die ; and then that He, whom they thought to be dead, was to give

[1] Zeph. iii. 19. [2] Isa. lxv. 2.

life to others; in the type of those that fell in Israel. For God caused all sorts of serpents to bite them, and they died; forasmuch as by a serpent transgression began in Eve; that so He might convince them, that for their transgressions they shall be delivered into the pain of death. Moses then himself, who had commanded them, saying, "Ye shall not make to yourselves any graven or molten image, to be your god,"[1] yet now did so himself, that he might represent to them the figure of the Lord Jesus. For he made a brazen serpent, and set it up on high, and called the people together by a proclamation; where, being come, they entreated Moses that he would make an atonement for them, and pray that they might be healed. Then Moses spake unto them, saying, when any one among you shall be bitten, "let him come unto the serpent that is set upon the pole; and let him assuredly trust in Him, that though he be dead, yet He is able to give life, and presently he shall be saved;" and so they did. See, therefore, how here also you have in this the glory of Jesus; "and that in Him, and to Him, are all things."[2] Again, what says Moses to Jesus the son of Nun, when He gave that name unto him, as being a prophet, that all the people might hear him alone, because the Father[3] did manifest all things concerning His Son Jesus, in Jesus the son of Nun; and gave him that name when he sent him to spy out the land of Canaan; he said, "Take a book in thine hands and write what the Lord saith: forasmuch as Jesus, the Son of God, shall in the last days cut off by the roots all the house of Amalech."[4] See here again Jesus, not the son of man, but the Son of God, made manifest in a type and in the flesh. But because it might hereafter be said that Christ was the Son of David; therefore David, fearing and well knowing the errors of the wicked, saith, "The Lord said unto my Lord, sit Thou on My right hand until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool."[5] And again Isaiah speaketh on this wise, "The Lord said unto Christ my Lord, I have laid hold on His right hand, that the nations should obey before Him, and I will break the strength of kings." Behold how both David and Isaiah call Him Lord, and the Son of God.

XIII. But let us go yet farther, and inquire whether His

[1] Deut. xxvii. 15. [2] Rom. xi. 36. [3] Deut. xviii. 15, 18.
[4] Exod. xvii. 14. [5] Psa. cx. 1.

people be the heir, or the former; and whether the covenant be with us, or with them. And first, as concerning the people, hear now what the Scripture saith. Isaac[1] prayed for his wife Rebekah, because she was barren; and she conceived. Afterwards Rebekah went forth to inquire of the Lord. And the Lord said unto her, "There are two nations in thy womb, and two people shall come from thy body; and the one shall have power over the other, and the greater shall serve the lesser." Understand here, who was Isaac, who Rebekah, and of whom it was foretold that this people should be greater than that. And in another prophecy, Jacob speaketh more clearly to his son Joseph, saying, "Behold, the Lord hath not deprived me of seeing thy face; bring me thy sons that I may bless them."[2] And he brought unto his father, Manasseh and Ephraim, desiring that he should bless Manasseh, because he was the elder. Therefore Joseph brought him to the right hand of his father Jacob. But Jacob, by the Spirit, foresaw the figure of the people that was to come. And what saith the Scripture? "And Jacob crossed his hands, and put his right hand upon Ephraim, his second and the younger son, and blessed him." And Joseph said unto Jacob, "Put thy right hand upon the head of Manasseh, for he is my first-born son." And Jacob said unto Joseph, "I know it, my son, I know it, but the greater shall serve the lesser, though he also shall be blessed." Ye see of whom He appointed it, that they should be the first people and heirs of the covenant. If therefore, God shall have yet farther taken notice of this by Abraham too, our understanding of it will then be perfectly established. What then saith the Scripture[3] to Abraham, when he "believed; and it was imputed unto him for righteousness? Behold I have made thee a father of the nations, which without circumcision believe in the Lord."

XIV. Let us, therefore, now inquire whether God has fulfilled the covenant, which He sware to our fathers that He would give the people? Yes verily, He gave it: but they were not worthy to receive it, by reason of their sins. For thus saith the prophet: "And Moses continued fasting in Mount Sinai, to receive the covenant of the Lord with the people, forty days and forty nights."[4] And he received of

[1] Gen. xxv. 21. Comp. St Paul, Rom. ix.
[2] Gen. xlviii.
[3] Gen. xv. 6; xvii. 5.
[4] Exod. xxiv. 18.

the Lord two tables, written with the finger[1] of the Lord's hand in the Spirit. And Moses when he had received them, brought them down that he might deliver them to the people. And the Lord said unto Moses, "Moses, Moses, get thee down quickly, for the people which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt have done wickedly."[2] And Moses understood that they had again set up a molten image; and he cast the two tables out of his hands; and the tables of the covenant of the Lord were broken. Moses, therefore, received them, but they were not worthy. Now, then, learn how we have received them: Moses, being a servant, took them; but the Lord Himself has given them unto us, that we might be the people of His inheritance, having suffered for us. He was, therefore, made manifest, that they should fill up the measure of their sins, and that we, being made heirs by Him, should receive the covenant of the Lord Jesus. And again the prophet saith, "Behold I have set thee for a light unto the Gentiles, to be the Saviour of all the ends of the earth, saith the Lord, the God who hath redeemed thee."[3] Who for that very end was prepared, that by His own appearing, He might redeem our hearts, already devoured by death, and delivered over to the irregularity of error, from darkness; and establish a covenant with us by His word. For so it is written, that the Father commanded Him, by delivering us from darkness, to prepare unto Himself a holy people. Wherefore the prophet saith, "I the Lord thy God have called thee in righteousness, and I will take thee by thy hand, and will strengthen thee; and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles: to open the eyes of the blind, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house."[4] Consider, therefore, from whence we have been redeemed. And again the prophet saith, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me: He hath sent me to preach glad tidings to the lowly; to heal the broken in heart; to preach remission to the captives, and sight unto the blind; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of restitution; to comfort all that mourn."[5]

XV. Furthermore it is written concerning the Sabbath, in

[1] Deut. ix. 10; Exod. xxxi. 12. [2] Exod. xxxii. 7; Deut. ix. 12.
[3] Isa. xlix. 6. [4] Isa. xlii. 6, 7. [5] Isa. lxi. 1, 2. Comp. Luke iv. 18.

the ten commandments which God spake in the Mount Sinai to Moses, face to face; "Sanctify the Sabbath of the Lord with pure hands and a clean heart."[1] And elsewhere He saith, "If thy children shall keep My Sabbaths, then will I put My mercy upon them."[2] And even in the beginning of the creation, He makes mention of the Sabbath: "and God made in six days the works of His hands; and He finished them on the seventh day, and He rested the seventh day, and sanctified it."[3] Consider, my children, what that signifies—He finished them in six days. The meaning of it is this—that in six thousand years, the Lord God will bring all things to an end. For with Him one day is a thousand years: as Himself testifieth, saying, "Behold this day shall be as a thousand years."[4] Therefore, children, in six days, that is, in six thousand years, shall all things be accomplished. And what is that He saith, "And He rested the seventh day"? He meaneth this, that when His Son shall come, and abolish the season of the wicked one, and judge the ungodly; and shall change the sun, and the moon, and the stars; then He shall gloriously rest on that seventh day. He adds, lastly, "Thou shalt sanctify it with clean hands and a pure heart." Wherefore we are greatly deceived if we imagine that any one can now sanctify that day which God has made holy, without having a heart pure in all things. Behold, therefore, He will then truly sanctify it with blessed rest, when we (having received the righteous promise, when iniquity shall be no more, all things being renewed by the Lord) shall be able to sanctify it, being ourselves first made holy. Lastly, He saith unto them, "Your new moons and your Sabbaths, I cannot bear them."[5] Consider what He means by it;—the Sabbaths, says He, which ye now keep, are not acceptable unto Me, but those which I have made; when resting from all things, I shall begin the eighth day, that is, the beginning of the other world. For which cause we observe the eighth day with gladness, in which Jesus rose from the dead; and having manifested Himself to His disciples, He ascended into heaven.

XVI. It remains yet that I speak to you concerning the temple; how those miserable men being deceived, have put

[1] Exod. xx. 8. [2] Jer. xvii. 24. [3] Gen. ii. 2.; Exod. xx. 11; xxxi. 17.
[4] Psal. lxxxix. 4. [5] Isa. i. 13.

their trust in the house, and not in the God Himself who made them; as if it were the habitation of God. For much after the same manner as the Gentiles, they consecrated Him in the temple. But learn, therefore, how the Lord speaketh, rendering the temple vain: "Who has measured the heaven with a span, and the earth with His hand? Is it not I?"[1] Thus saith the Lord,—"Heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool. What is the house that ye will build Me? Or what is the place of My rest?"[2] Know therefore, that all their hope is vain. And again, He speaketh after this manner: "Behold, they that destroy this temple, even they shall again build it up."[3] And so it came to pass; for through their wars it is now destroyed by their enemies; and the servants of their enemies build it up. Furthermore it has been made manifest, how both the city and the temple, and the people of Israel should be given up. For the Scripture saith, "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the Lord will deliver up the sheep of His pasture, and their fold, and their tower unto destruction."[4] And it has come to pass as the Lord hath spoken. Let us inquire, therefore, whether there be any temple of God? Yes, there is; and that there, where Himself declares that He would both make and perfect it. For it is written, "And it shall be, that as soon as the week shall be completed, the temple of the Lord shall be gloriously built in the name of the Lord."[5] I find, therefore, that there is a temple. But how shall it be built in the name of the Lord? I will show you. Before that we believed in God, the habitation of our heart was corruptible and feeble, as a temple truly built with hands. For it was a house full of idolatry, a house of devils: inasmuch as there was done in it whatsoever was contrary unto God. But it shall be built in the name of the Lord. Consider, how that the temple of the Lord should be very gloriously built; and by what means that shall be, learn. Having received remission of our sins, and trusting in the name of the Lord, we are become renewed, being again created, as it were from the beginning. Wherefore God truly dwells in our house, that is, in us. But how does He dwell in us? The word of His faith, the calling of His promise, the wisdom of His righteous judgments,

[1] Isa. xl. 12. [2] Isa. lxvi. 1. [3] Isa. xlix. 17.
[4] Zephan. ii. 6. [5] Dan. ix.; Haggai ii.

the commands of His doctrine. He Himself prophesies within us: He Himself dwelleth within us, and openeth to us, who were in bondage of death, the gate of our temple; that is, the mouth of wisdom; having given repentance unto us; and, by this means, He has brought us to be an incorruptible temple. He therefore that desires to be saved looketh not unto the man, but unto Him that dwelleth in him, and speaketh by him; being struck with wonder, forasmuch as he never either heard Him speaking such words out of His mouth, nor ever desired to hear them. This is that spiritual temple that is built unto the Lord.

XVII. And thus, I trust, I have declared to you as much, and with as great simplicity as I could, those things which make for your salvation, so as not to have omitted any thing that might be requisite thereunto. For should I speak farther of the things that now are, and of those that are to come, you would not yet understand them, seeing they lie in parables. This, therefore, shall suffice as to these things.

XVIII. Let us now go on to the other kind of knowledge and doctrine. There are two ways of doctrine and power; the one of light, the other of darkness. But there is a great deal of difference between these two ways: for over one are appointed the angels of God, the leaders of the way of light; over the other, the angels of Satan. And the one is the Lord from everlasting to everlasting; the other is the prince of the time of unrighteousness.

XIX. Now the way of light is this, if any one desires to attain to the place that is appointed for him, and will hasten thither by his works. And the knowledge that has been given to us for walking in it, is to this effect: *Thou shalt love Him that made thee. *Thou shalt glorify Him that hath redeemed thee from death. *Thou shalt be simple in heart, and *rich in the Spirit. *Thou shalt not cleave to those that walk in the way of death. *Thou shalt hate to do any thing that is not pleasing unto God. *Thou shalt abhor all dissimulation. *Thou shalt not neglect any of the commands of the Lord. *Thou shalt not exalt thyself, but shalt be humble. *Thou shalt not take honour to thyself. *Thou shalt not enter into any wicked counsel against thy neighbour. *Thou shalt not be over-confident in thy heart. *Thou shalt not commit *fornication nor *adultery. Neither shalt thou *corrupt thyself with mankind.

*Thou shalt not make use of the word of God to any impurity. *Thou shalt not accept any man's person, when thou reprovest any one's faults. *Thou shalt be gentle. *Thou shalt be quiet. *Thou shalt tremble at the words which thou hast heard. *Thou shalt not keep any hatred in thy heart against thy brother. *Thou shalt not entertain any doubt whether it shall be or not. *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord in vain. *Thou shalt love thy neighbour above thy own soul. *Thou shalt not destroy thy conceptions before they are brought forth; nor kill them after they are born. *Thou shalt not withdraw thy hand from thy son, or from thy daughter; but shalt teach them from their youth the fear of the Lord. *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods; neither shalt thou be an extortioner. *Neither shall thy heart be joined to proud men; but thou shalt be numbered among the righteous and the lowly. *Whatever events shall happen unto thee, thou shalt receive them as good. *Thou shalt not be double-minded or double-tongued; for a double tongue is the snare of death. *Thou shalt be subject unto the Lord, and to inferior masters as to the representatives of God, in fear and reverence. *Thou shalt not be bitter in thy commands towards any of thy servants that trust in God; lest thou chance not to fear Him who is over both; because He came not to call any with respect of persons; but whomsoever the Spirit had prepared. * Thou shall communicate to thy neighbour of all thou hast; thou shalt not call any thing thine own: for if ye partake in such things as are incorruptible, how much more should ye do it in those that are corruptible? [1] * Thou shalt not be forward to speak, for the mouth is the snare of death. [2] * Strive for thy soul with all thy might. [3] * Reach not out thine hand to receive, and withhold it not when thou shouldest give. * Thou shalt love, as the apple of thine eye, every one that speaketh unto thee the word of the Lord. * Call to thy remembrance, day and night, the future judgment. * Thou shalt seek out every day the persons of the righteous; * and both consider, and go about to exhort others by the word, and meditate how thou mayest save a soul. * Thou shalt also labour with thy hands to give to the poor, that thy sins may be forgiven thee. * Thou shalt not deliberate whether thou shouldest give; * nor having given, murmur at it. * Give to every one that asks;

[1] See Eccles. iv. 34. [2] *Ibid.*, ver. 33. [3] *Ibid.*, ver. 36.

so shalt thou know who is the good rewarder of thy gifts. * Keep what thou hast received; thou shalt neither add to it, nor take from it. * Let the wicked be always thy aversion. * Thou shalt judge righteous judgment. * Thou shalt never cause divisions: but shalt make peace between those that are at variance, and bring them together. * Thou shalt confess thy sins; * and not come to thy prayer with an evil conscience. This is the way of light.

XX. But the way of darkness is crooked, and full of cursing, For it is the way of eternal death, with punishment, in which they that walk meet those things that destroy their own souls. Such are—idolatry, confidence, pride of power, hypocrisy, double-mindedness, adultery, murder, rapine, pride, transgression, deceit, malice, arrogance, witchcraft, covetousness, and the want of the fear of God. In this walk those who are the persecutors of them that are good—haters of truth, lovers of lies; who know not the reward of righteousness, nor cleave to any thing that is good; who administer not righteous judgment to the widow and orphan; who watch for wickedness, and not for the fear of the Lord: from whom gentleness and patience are far off; who love vanity, and follow after rewards; having no compassion upon the poor: nor take any pains for such as are heavy laden and oppressed: ready to evil-speaking, not knowing Him that made them; murderers of children, corrupters of the creature of God, that turn away from the needy, oppress the afflicted; are the advocates of the rich, but unjust judges of the poor; being altogether sinners.

XXI. It is therefore fitting, that, learning the just commands of the Lord, which we have before mentioned, we should walk in them. For he who does such things shall be glorified in the kingdom of God. But he that chooses the other part shall be destroyed together with his works. For this cause, there shall be both a resurrection, and a retribution. I beseech those that are in high estate among you (if so be you will take the counsel which with a good intention I offer to you:) you have those with you towards whom you may do good; do not forsake them. For the day is at hand in which all things shall be destroyed, together with the wicked one. The Lord is near, and His reward is with Him. I beseech you, therefore, again and again, be as good lawgivers to one another: con-

tinue faithful counsellors to each other: remove from among you all hypocrisy. And may God, the Lord of all the world, give you wisdom, knowledge, counsel, and understanding of His judgments in patience! Be ye taught of God; seeking what it is the Lord requires of you, and doing it; that ye may be saved in the day of judgment. And if there be among you any remembrance of what is good, think of Me; meditating upon these things, that both my desire and my watching for you may turn to a good account. I beseech you, I ask it as a favour of you, whilst you are in this beautiful tabernacle of the body, be wanting in none of these things; but without ceasing seek them, and fulfil every command: for these things are fitting and worthy to be done. Wherefore I have given the more diligence to write unto you, according to my ability, that you might rejoice. Farewell, children of love and peace. The Lord of glory, and of all grace, be with your spirit. Amen.

The end of the epistle of Barnabas, the apostle and fellow-traveller of St Paul the apostle.

THE EPISTLES OF CLEMENT OF ROME.

INTRODUCTION

TO

THE EPISTLES OF CLEMENT OF ROME.

CLEMENT is named by St Paul in Phil. iv. 3. Church history records that Clement was the third Bishop of Rome. Are they the same person? There are two Epistles said to be written by Clement, Bishop of Rome. Are they genuine works of his? Here are distinct questions which we will shortly discuss.

St Paul wrote his Epistle to the Philippians at Rome about the year 63. But Eusebius in his chronicle places the death of Clement in A.D. 95. It is possible, certainly, though not probable, that one who was holding high office in the Church of Philippi when St Paul wrote, was presiding over the Church of Rome more than thirty years later. There is no evidence forthcoming for or against the identity. And the Episcopate of Clement is not without difficulties. One very ancient catalogue (the Liberian) makes the order of Roman Bishops to be St Peter, Linus, Clement, Cletus. Tertullian says that St Peter appointed Clement. Some have supposed that Linus was appointed by St Paul president over a Roman body of Gentile Christians, while Clement was over a Church of Jewish believers; and others again have thought that all those we have named were leading elders of the Church, acting under the two great apostles. But when all is duly weighed, it must be taken as certain that the universal traditions that St Clement was Bishop of Rome can only be accounted for by its truth. And it is remarkable that the ancient liturgy of the

Church of Rome, which in all probability is Apostolic in its basis, and certainly cannot be later than the second century, mentions Clement by name as its Bishop.

It is evident then that St Clement was a very great man in the estimation of the Church, though his writings which have come down to us are but small in quantity. He is great to us, if it were only for the fact that he is the chief connecting link between the days of the Apostles and the great stream of Christian writers which has continued unbroken from the second century. Legends have gathered round his personal life, which, though we may dismiss them as resting on no adequate evidence, indicate how great was St Clement in the eyes of the age which followed him. And the writings called the "Clementine Homilies" and "Recognitions," forgeries bearing his name, were written by the Ebionites,—*i.e.*, the remnants of that Judaizing party which kindled St Paul's righteous anger, in the last despairing hope of making good its footing within the realm of Christian theology. The fact that the name of St Clement was used in the endeavour to foist them on the Church is a proof of the great estimate in which he was held.

Some of the early accounts make him to be an Athenian, others identify him with Flavius Clemens, a relation of the Emperor Domitian, who, according to Suetonius, was put to death by that emperor on a charge of "Atheism," the usual charge brought against Christians. But against this we have to consider that no one before Ruffinus (5th century) speaks of St Clement as a martyr. We may add here that both Renan and Bishop Lightfoot, examining the first Epistle of Clement independently, have come to the conclusion that the writer was a Jewish Christian, as were the twelve apostles.

So much for the Father himself. When we come to the further question, viz., the genuineness of the two writings ascribed to him, we have to discriminate between them. The first is now received as genuine, the second not so.

The first Epistle of Clement is addressed to the Church of Corinth. It is not prefaced with the writer's name, but is written "from the Church of Rome." But universal tradition declares it to be the work of Clement; and Hermas in his Shepherd calls it his, and incidentally mentions that he personally knew him. And the whole spirit of the Epistle is

one of marked individuality. It is no joint manifesto; it is a living man who is speaking. The object of the Epistle is to exhort the Church of Corinth to unity. As in St Paul's time, so again now, dissensions had broken out in that Church, though Clement does not tell us on what ground. Apparently it was not a ground of doctrine, nor of self-styled Petrine and Pauline partisans; these factions had ceased; but it was the result of self-will on the part of some quarrelsome spirits who had combined against the presbyters. The writer speaks of his own Church as having recently passed through persecution, and therefore we must fix the date either in the days of Nero or of Domitian,—all probability points to the latter.

The second Epistle of Clement so-called is not said to be to the Corinthians, though later writers have so described it. But it is all but certain that this Epistle is not St Clement's at all. It is indeed very ancient, probably belonging to the first half of the second century, but the line of thought is so different from the first as to preclude the opinion that it is from the same hand. Moreover it is not an Epistle at all, it is a Homily addressed to a congregation in church. The discovery of the latter portion (see preface, p. 9) makes this clear. The writer is apparently a Gentile Christian, speaking of a time when he and his worshipped idols. The tone of it is lofty, the spirit deeply religious, and the doctrine thoroughly Catholic. It remains then a valuable relic of the second century, the author of which is unknown, but we have kept it in its present place because of its traditional connexion with St Clement.

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THE FIRST EPISTLE OF ST CLEMENT TO THE CORINTHIANS.

The Church of God which is at Rome to the Church of God which is at Corinth, elect, sanctified, by the will of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord: grace and peace from the Almighty God, by Jesus Christ, be multiplied unto you.

BRETHREN,—The sudden and unexpected dangers and calamities that have fallen upon us have, we fear, made us the more slow in our consideration of those things which you inquired of us; as also of that wicked and detestable sedition, so unbecoming the elect of God, which a few heady and self-willed men have fomented to such a degree of madness that your venerable and renowned name, so worthy of all men to be beloved, is greatly blasphemed thereby. For who that has ever been among you has not experimented the firmness of your faith, and its fruitfulness in all good works, and admired the temper and moderation of your religion in Christ, and published abroad the magnificence of your hospitality, and thought you happy in your perfect and certain knowledge of the gospel? For ye did all things without respect of persons, and walked according to the laws of God; being subject to those who had the rule over you, and giving the honour that was fitting to such as were the aged among you. Ye commanded the young men to think those things that were modest and grave. The women ye exhorted to do all things with an unblameable, and seemly, and pure conscience; loving their own husbands, as was fitting; and that, keeping themselves within the bounds of a due obedience, they should order their houses gravely, with all discretion.[1]

[1] 1 Pet. v. 5.

II. Ye were all of you humble-minded, not boasting of anything; desiring rather to be subject than to govern, to give than to receive;[1] being content with the portion God had dispensed to you;[2] and, hearkening diligently to His word, ye were enlarged in your bowels, having His sufferings always before your eyes. Thus a firm, and blessed, and profitable peace was given unto you; and an unsatiable desire of doing good, and a plentiful effusion of the Holy Ghost, was upon all of you. And, being full of good designs, ye did, with great readiness of mind, and with a religious confidence, stretch forth your hands to God Almighty, beseeching Him to be merciful unto you, if in anything ye had unwittingly sinned against Him. Ye contended day and night for the whole brotherhood; that with compassion, and a good conscience, the number of His elect might be saved. Ye were sincere, and without offence towards each other; not mindful of injuries. All sedition and schism was an abomination unto you. Ye bewailed every one his neighbour's sins, esteeming their defects your own. Ye were kind one to another, without grudging,[3] being ready to every good work; and, being adorned with a conversation altogether virtuous and religious, ye did all things in the fear of God, whose commandments were written upon the tables of our hearts.[4]

III. All honour and enlargement was given unto you; and so was fulfilled that which is written, "My beloved did eat and drink, he was enlarged and waxed fat, and he kicked."[5] From hence came emulation, and envy, and strife, and sedition: persecution, and disorder, war and captivity. So they who were of no renown lifted up themselves against the honourable; those of no reputation against those that were in respect; the foolish against the wise, the young men against the aged. Therefore righteousness and peace are departed from you, because every one hath forsaken the fear of God, and is grown blind in his faith, nor walketh by the rule of God's commandments, nor liveth as is fitting in Christ; but every one follows his own wicked lusts, having taken up an unjust and wicked envy, by which death first entered into the world.

IV. For thus it is written: "[6]And in process of time it

[1] Acts xx. 35. [2] 1 Tim. vi. 8. [3] Titus iii. 1.
[4] Prov. vii. 3. [5] Deut. xxxii. 15. [6] Gen. iv. 3, &c.

came to pass that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof: and the Lord had respect unto Abel, and to his offering. But unto Cain and unto his offering He had not respect. And Cain was very sorrowful, and his countenance fell. And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou sorrowful? and why is thy countenance fallen? [1] If thou shalt offer aright, but not divide aright, hast thou not sinned? Hold thy peace: unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him. And Cain said unto Abel his brother, Let us go down into the field. And it came to pass, as they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him." Ye see, brethren, how envy and emulation wrought the death of a brother. For this [2] our father Jacob fled from the face of his brother Esau. It was this that caused Joseph to be persecuted even unto death, and to come into bondage.[3] Envy forced Moses [4] to flee from the face of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, when he heard his own countryman ask him, "Who made thee a judge, and a ruler over us? Wilt thou kill me as thou didst the Egyptian yesterday?" [5] Through envy Aaron and Miriam were shut out of the camp from the rest of the congregation seven days.[6] Emulation sent Dathan and Abiram quick into the grave, because they raised up a sedition against Moses, the servant of God. For this David was not only hated of strangers, but was persecuted even by Saul, the king of Israel.

V. But, not to insist upon ancient examples, let us come to those worthies that have been nearest to us, and take the brave examples of our own age. Through zeal and envy, the most faithful and righteous pillars of the church have been persecuted, even to the most grievous deaths. Let us set before our eyes the holy apostles: Peter, by unjust envy, underwent, not one or two, but many sufferings; till at last, being martyred, he went to the place of glory that was due unto him. For the same cause did Paul in like manner receive the reward of his patience. Seven times he was in bonds; he was whipped, was stoned; he preached both in the east and in the west, leaving behind him

[1] This is according to the LXX. [2] Gen. xxviii.
[3] Gen. xxxvii. [4] Exod. ii. 15. [5] Exod. ii. 14. [6] Num. xii. 14, 15.

the glorious report of his faith; and so, having taught the whole world righteousness, and for that end travelled even to the utmost bounds of the west, he at last suffered martyrdom, by the command of the governors, and departed out of the world, and went unto his holy place, being become a most eminent pattern of patience unto all ages.

VI. To these holy apostles were joined a very great number of others, who, having through envy undergone, in like manner, many pains and torments, have left a glorious example for us. For this, not only men, but women, have been persecuted, and, having suffered very grievous and cruel punishments, have finished the course of their faith with firmness, and, though weak in body, yet received a glorious reward. This has alienated the minds even of women from their husbands, and changed what was once said by our father Adam: "This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh."[1] In a word, envy and strife have overturned whole cities, and rooted out great nations from off the earth.

VII. These things, beloved, we write unto you, not only for your instruction, but also for your own remembrance; for we are all in the same lists, and the same combat is prepared for us all: wherefore let us lay aside all vain and empty cares, and let us come up to the glorious and venerable rule of our holy calling. Let us consider what is good, and acceptable, and well pleasing in the sight of Him that made us.[2] Let us look steadfastly to the blood of Christ, and see how precious His blood is in the sight of God: which, being shed for our salvation, has obtained the grace of repentance for all the world. Let us search into all the ages that have gone before us; and let us learn that our Lord has in every one of them still given place for repentance to all such as would turn to Him. Noah preached repentance; and as many as hearkened to him were saved.[3] Jonah denounced destruction against the Ninevites:[4] howbeit they, repenting of their sins, appeased God by their prayers, and were saved, though they were strangers to the covenant of God.

VIII. Hence we find how all the ministers of the grace of God have spoken, by the Holy Spirit, of repentance. And even the Lord of all has Himself declared with an oath con-

[1] Gen. ii. 23.
[2] 1 Tim. v. 4.
[3] 2 Pet. ii. 5. Gen. vii.
[4] Jon. iii,

cerning it: "As I live, saith the Lord, I desire not the death of a sinner,[1] but that he should repent;"—adding farther this good sentence, saying, "Turn from your iniquity, O house of Israel. Say unto the children of My people, Though your sins should reach from earth to heaven, and though they should be redder than scarlet, and blacker than sackcloth,[2] yet, if ye shall turn to Me with all your heart, and shall call Me Father,[3] I will hearken to you as to a holy people."[4] And in another place, he saith on this wise: "Wash ye, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red as crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land; but, if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." These things has God established by His almighty will, desiring that all His beloved should come to repentance.

IX. Wherefore let us obey His excellent and glorious will, and, imploring His mercy and goodness, let us fall down upon our faces before Him, and cast ourselves upon His mercy, laying aside all vanity, and contention, and envy, which leads unto death. Let us look up to those who have the most perfectly ministered to His excellent glory. Let us take Enoch for our example, who, being found righteous in obedience,[5] was translated, and his death was not known. Noah, being proved[6] to be faithful, did, by his ministry, preach regeneration to the world; and the Lord saved by him all the living creatures that went with one accord together into the ark.

X. Abraham, who was called God's friend,[7] was in like manner found faithful, inasmuch as he obeyed the commands of God. By obedience he went out of his own country, and from his own kindred, and from his father's house; that so, forsaking a small country, and a weak affinity, and a little house, he might inherit the promises of God. For thus God

[1] Ezek. xxxiii. 11. [2] Isaiah i. [3] Jer. iii. 4, 19.
[4] Isa. i. 16. [5] Gen. v. 24. [6] Gen. vi. vii. viii.
[7] Jam. ii. 23. Isaiah xli. 8.

said unto Him: "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee. And I will make thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great, and thou shalt be blessed. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed."[1] And again, when he separated himself from Lot, God said unto him: "Lift up now thine eyes,[2] and look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward; for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth, so that, if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered." And again, he saith, "And God brought forth Abraham, and said unto him, Look now towards heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: so shall thy seed be. And Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness."[3] Through faith and hospitality, he had a son given him in his old age; and through obedience he offered him up in sacrifice to God, upon one of the mountains which God showed unto him.

XI. By hospitality and godliness was Lot saved out of Sodom,[4] when all the country round about was destroyed by fire and brimstone, the Lord thereby making it manifest, that He will not forsake those that trust in Him, but will bring the disobedient to punishment and correction. For his wife, who went out with him, being of a different mind, and not continuing in the same obedience, was for that reason set forth for an example, being turned into a pillar of salt unto this day. That so all men may know that those who are double-minded, and distrustful of the power of God, are prepared for condemnation, and to be a sign to all succeeding ages.

XII. By faith and hospitality was Rahab the harlot saved.[5] For when the spies were sent by Joshua the son of Nun to search out Jericho, and the king of Jericho knew that they were come to spy out his country, he sent men to take them, that so they might be put to death. Rahab, therefore, being hospitable, received them, and hid them under the stalks of flax on the top of her house. And when the messengers that

[1] Gen. xii. 1. [2] Gen. xiii. 14. [3] Gen. xv. 5.
[4] Gen. xix. 2 Pet. ii. 6. Jude 7. [5] Jos. ii. 1, &c.

were sent by the king came unto her, and asked her, saying, "There came men unto thee to spy out the land, bring them forth, for so hath the king commanded," [1] she answered, "The two men whom ye seek came unto me, but presently they departed, and are gone:" [2] not discovering them unto them. Then she said to the spies, "I know that the Lord [3] your God has given this city into your hands; for the fear of you is fallen upon all that dwell therein. When therefore, ye shall have taken it,[4] ye shall save me, and my father's house." And they answered her, saying: "It shall be as thou hast spoken unto us. Therefore, when thou shalt know that we are near, thou shalt gather all thy family together upon the house-top, and they shall be saved: but all that shall be found without thy house shall be destroyed." [5] And they gave her moreover a sign, that she should hang out of her house a scarlet rope; [6] showing thereby that by the blood of our Lord there should be redemption to all that believe and hope in God. Ye see, beloved, how there was not only faith, but prophecy too in this woman.

XIII. Let us, therefore, humble ourselves, brethren, laying aside all pride, and boasting, and foolishness, and anger: and let us do as it is written. For thus saith the Holy Spirit, "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, nor the strong man in his strength, nor the rich man in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in the Lord, to seek him, and to do judgment and justice." [7] Above all, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, which He spake concerning equity and long suffering, saying,[8] "Be ye merciful, and ye shall obtain mercy: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven; as ye do, so shall it be done unto you: as ye give, so shall it be given unto you: as ye judge, so shall ye be judged: as ye are kind to others, so shall God be kind to you: with what measure ye mete, with the same shall it be measured to you again." By this command, and by these rules, let us establish ourselves, that so we may always walk obediently to His holy words, being humble-minded; for so says the Holy Scripture: "Upon whom shall I look? even upon him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and that trembles at My word." [9]

[1] Jos. ii. 3. [2] Jos. ii. 4, 5. [3] Jos. ii. 9. [4] Ver. 13.
[5] Jos. ii. 18, 19. [6] Ver. 18. [7] Jer. ix. 23. Comp. 1 Cor. ix. 31.
[8] Luke vi. 36. [9] Isaiah lxvi. 2.

XIV. It is, therefore, just and righteous, men and brethren, that we should become obedient unto God, rather than follow such as, through pride and sedition, have made themselves the ringleaders of a detestable emulation. For it is not an ordinary harm that we shall do ourselves, but rather a very great danger that we shall run, if we shall rashly give up ourselves to the wills of men, who promote strife and seditions, to turn us aside from that which is fitting. But let us be kind to one another, according to the compassion and sweetness of Him that made us; for it is written: "The merciful shall inherit the earth,"[1] and "they that are without evil shall be left upon it; but the transgressors shall perish from off the face of it."[2] And again He saith, "I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like the cedars of Libanus. I passed by, and lo, he was not; I sought his place, but it could not be found. Keep innocency, and do the thing that is right; for there shall be a remnant to the peaceable man."[3]

XV. Let us therefore hold fast to those who religiously follow peace; and not to such as only pretend to desire it. For He saith, in a certain place, "This people honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me."[4] And again: "They bless with their mouth, but curse in their heart."[5] And again[6] He saith, "They loved Him with their mouth, and with their tongue they lied to Him. For their heart was not right with Him, neither were they faithful in His covenant." "Let all deceitful lips become dumb, and the tongue that speaketh proud things. Who have said, With our tongue we will prevail: our lips are our own, who is lord over us? For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord; I will set him in safety, I will deal confidently with him."[7]

XVI. For Christ is theirs who are humble, and not who exalt themselves over His flock. The sceptre of the Majesty of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, came not in the show of pride, and arrogance, though He could have done so, but with humility, as the Holy Ghost had before spoken concerning Him. For thus He saith, "Lord, who hath believed our

[1] Psal. xxxvii. 9.
[2] Prov. ii. 21, 22.
[3] Psal. xxxvii. 36.
[4] Isaiah xxix. 13.
[5] Psal. lxii. 4.
[6] Psal. lxxxiii. 36, 37.
[7] Psal. xii. 3.

report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground. He hath no form nor comeliness; and, when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. And we hid as it were our faces from Him: He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth: He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter; and, as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment; and who shall declare His generation? For He was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of My people was He stricken. And He made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death; because He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; He hath put Him to grief. When Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand. He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied; by His knowledge shall My righteous servant justify many: for He shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong; because He hath poured out His soul unto death: and He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."[1] And again He Himself saith, "I am a worm and no man, a reproach of men, and despised of the people. All they that see me laugh me to scorn; they shoot out their lips; they shake their head, saying, He trusted in the Lord that He would deliver him; let Him deliver him, seeing He delighted in him."[2] Ye see, beloved, what the pattern is that has been given to us. For, if

[1] Isai. liii. according to the Hebrew. [2] Psal. xxii. 6.

the Lord thus humbled Himself, what should we do who are brought by Him under the yoke of His grace?

XVII. Let us be followers of those who went about in goat-skins and sheep-skins, preaching the coming of Christ. Such were Elias, and Elisæus, and Ezekiel, the prophets. And let us add to these such others as have received the like testimony. Abraham has been greatly witnessed of; having been called the friend of God. And yet he, steadfastly beholding the glory of God, says with all humility, "I am dust and ashes."[1] Again of Job it is thus written, that "he was just and without blame, true, one that served God, and abstained from all evil."[2] Yet he, accusing himself, says, "No man is free from pollution, no not though he should live but one day."[3] Moses was called faithful in all God's house; and by his conduct the Lord punished Israel by stripes and plagues. And even this man, though thus greatly honoured, spake not greatly of himself; but, when the oracle of God was delivered to him out of the bush, he said, "Who am I, that thou dost send me? I am of a slender voice, and a slow tongue."[4] And again he saith, "I am as the smoke of the pot."[5]

XVIII. And what shall we say of David, so highly testified of in the holy Scriptures, to whom God said, "I have found a man after My own heart, David the son of Jesse; with My holy oil I have anointed him?"[6] But yet he himself saith unto God; "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy loving kindness; according unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight, that thou mightest be justified when Thou speakest, and be clear when Thou judgest. Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold Thou desirest truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part Thou shalt make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me to hear joy and gladness, that the bones which Thou hast broken may rejoice. Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O

[1] Gen. xviii. 27. [2] Job i. 1. [3] Job xiv. 4.
[4] Exod. iii. 11. [5] *Ibid.*, iv. 10. [6] Psal. lxxxix. 29.

God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with Thy free Spirit. Then will I teach transgressors Thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto Thee. Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, Thou God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of Thy righteousness. O LORD, open Thou my lips, and my mouth shall shew forth Thy praise. For Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it; Thou delightest not in burnt-offerings. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." [1]

XIX. Thus has the humility and godly fear of these great and excellent men, recorded in the Scriptures, through obedience, made not only us, but also the generations before us better; even as many as have received His holy oracles with fear and truth. Having therefore so many and such great and glorious examples, let us return to that peace which was the mark that from the beginning was set before us; let us look up to the Father and Creator of the whole world, and let us hold fast to His glorious and exceeding gifts and benefits of peace. Let us consider and behold with the eyes of our understanding His long-suffering will; and think how gentle and patient He is towards His whole creation.

XX. The heavens, moving by His appointment, are subject to Him in peace. Day and night accomplish the courses that He has allotted unto them, not disturbing one another. The sun and moon, and all the several companies and constellations of the stars, run the courses that He has appointed to them in concord, without departing in the least from them. The fruitful earth yields its fruit plentifully in due season, both to man and beast, and to all animals that are upon it, according to His will; not disputing, nor altering any thing of what was ordered by Him. So also the unfathomable and unsearchable floods of the deep are kept in by His command: and the conflux of the vast sea, being brought together by His order into its several collections, passes not the bounds that He has set to it: but as He appointed it so it remains. For He said, "Hitherto shalt thou come, and thy floods shall be broken within thee." The ocean, unpassable to mankind,

[1] Psal. li. to ver. 17, according to the Hebrew.

and the worlds that are beyond it, are governed by the same commands of their great Master. Spring and summer, autumn and winter, give place peaceably to each other. The several quarters of the winds fulfil their work in their seasons without offending one another. The ever-flowing fountains, made both for pleasure and health, never fail to reach out their breasts to support the life of men. Even the smallest creatures live together in peace and concord with each other. All these has the great Creator and Lord of all commanded to observe peace and concord, being good to all, but especially to us who flee to His mercy through our Lord Jesus Christ; to whom be glory and majesty for ever and ever. Amen.

XXI. Take heed, beloved, that His many blessings be not to us to condemnation—except we shall walk worthy of Him, doing with one consent what is good and pleasing in His sight. "The Spirit of the Lord is a candle, searching out the inward parts of the belly."[1] Let us, therefore, consider how near He is to us, and how that none of our thoughts, or reasonings, which we frame within ourselves, are hid from Him. It is therefore just that we should not forsake our rank, by doing contrary to His will. Let us choose to offend a few foolish and inconsiderate men, lifted up, and glorying in their own pride, rather than God. Let us reverence our Lord Jesus Christ, whose blood was given for us; let us honour those who are set over us; let us respect the aged that are amongst us; and let us instruct the younger men in the discipline and fear of the Lord. Our wives let us direct to do that which is good. Let them show forth a lovely habit of purity in all their conversation, with a sincere affection of meekness; let the government of their tongues be made manifest by their silence; let their charity be without respect of persons, alike towards all such as religiously fear God. Let their children be bred up in the instruction of Christ; and especially let them learn how great a power humility has with God—how much a pure and holy charity avails with him—how excellent and great His fear is—and how it will save all such as turn to Him with holiness in a pure mind. For He is the searcher of the thoughts and counsels of the heart: whose breath is in us, and when He pleases He can take it from us.

XXII. But all these things must be confirmed by the faith

[1] Prov. xx. 27.

which is in Christ; for so He Himself bespeaks us by the Holy Ghost:—"Come, ye children, and hearken unto Me, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord. What man is there that desireth life, and loveth to see good days? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips that they speak no guile. Depart from evil and do good; seek peace and ensue it. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers. But the face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. The righteous cried, and the Lord heard him, and delivered him out of all his troubles. Many are the troubles of the wicked; but they that trust in the Lord, mercy shall encompass them about."[1]

XXIII. Our all-merciful and beneficent Father hath bowels of compassion towards them that fear Him, and kindly and lovingly bestows His graces upon all such as come to Him with a simple mind. Wherefore let us not waver, neither let us have any doubts in our hearts of His excellent and glorious gifts. Let that be far from us which is written, "Miserable are the double-minded, and those who are doubtful in their hearts,[2] who say, These things have we heard, and our fathers have told us these things. But, behold, we are grown old, and none of them has happened unto us. O ye fools! consider the trees, take the vine for an example: first it sheds its leaves, then it buds; after that it spreads leaves, then it flowers; then come the sour grapes, and after them follows the ripe fruit." Ye see how in a little time the fruit of the trees comes to maturity. Of a truth, yet a little while, and His will shall suddenly be accomplished. The Holy Scripture itself[3] bearing witness, "that He shall quickly come and not tarry, and that the Lord shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Holy One whom ye look for."

XXIV. Let us consider, beloved, how the Lord does continually show us, that there shall be a future resurrection, of which He has made our Lord Jesus Christ the first-fruits, raising Him from the dead. Let us contemplate, beloved, the resurrection, that is continually made before our eyes. Day and night manifest a resurrection to us. The night lies down, and the day arises; again the day departs, and the night comes on. Let us behold the fruits of the earth: every one

[1] Psal. xxxiv. 11. [2] James i. 8. [3] Hab. ii. 3; Mal. iii. 1.

sees how the seed is sown: the sower goes forth, and casts it upon the earth, and the seed which, when it was sown, fell upon the earth dry and naked, in time dissolves; and from the dissolution the great power of the providence of the Lord raises it again, and of one seed many arise, and bring forth fruit.

XXV. Let us consider that wonderful type of the resurrection which is seen in the eastern countries; that is to say, in Arabia. There is a certain bird called a phœnix; of this there is never but one at a time, and that lives five hundred years; and, when the time of its dissolution draws near that it must die, it makes itself a nest of frankincense, and myrrh, and other spices; into which, when its time is fulfilled, it enters and dies. But its flesh, putrefying, breeds a certain worm, which, being nourished with the juice of the dead bird, brings forth feathers; and when it is grown to a perfect state, it takes up the nest in which the bones of its parent lie, and carries it from Arabia into Egypt, to a city called Heliopolis: and, flying in open day, in the sight of all men, lays it upon the altar of the sun, and so returns from whence it came. The priests then search into the records of the time; and find that it returned precisely at the end of five hundred years.

XXVI. And shall we then think it to be any very great and strange thing for the Lord of all to raise up those that religiously serve Him in the assurance of a good faith, when even by a bird He shews us the greatness of His power to fulfil His promise? For he says, in a certain place, "Thou shalt raise me up, and I shall confess unto thee." And again, "I laid me down, and slept, and awaked, because Thou art with me."[1] And again, Job says, "Thou shalt raise up this flesh of mine that has suffered all these things."[2]

XXVII. Having therefore this hope, let us hold fast to Him who is faithful in all His promises, and righteous in all His judgments, who has commanded us not to lie: how much more will He not Himself lie? For nothing is impossible with God but to lie. Let His faith then be stirred up again in us; and let us consider that all things are nigh unto Him. By the word of His power He made all things, and by the same word He is able [whenever He will] to destroy them. "Who shall say unto Him, What doest Thou? or who shall

[1] Psal. iii. 5. [2] Job ix. 27.

resist the power of His strength?"[1] When and as He please He will do all things; and nothing shall pass away of all that has been determined by Him. All things are open before Him; nor can any thing be hid from His counsel. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handy work. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard."[2]

XXVIII. Seeing then all things are seen and heard by God, let us fear Him, and let us lay aside our wicked works, which proceed from ill desires, that through His mercy we may be delivered from the condemnation to come. For whither can any of us flee from His mighty hand? or what world shall receive any of those who run away from Him? For thus saith the Scripture in a certain place, "Whither shall I flee [from Thy Spirit] or where shall I hide myself from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: if I shall go to the utmost parts of the earth, there is Thy right hand: if I shall make my bed in the deep, Thy Spirit is there."[3] Whither then shall any one go, or whither shall he run, from Him that comprehends all things?

XXIX. Let us therefore come to Him with holiness of heart, lifting up chaste and undefiled hands unto Him; loving our gracious and merciful Father, who has made us to partake of His election. For so it is written, "When the Most High divided the nations, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the nations, according to the number of His angels: His people Jacob became the portion of the Lord, and Israel the lot of His inheritance."[4] And in another place He saith, "Behold, the Lord taketh unto Himself a nation out of the midst of the nations, as a man taketh the first fruits of his flour; and the Most Holy shall come out of that nation."[5]

XXX. Wherefore, we being the portion of the Holy One,[6] let us do all those things that pertain unto holiness; fleeing all evil-speaking against one another, all filthy and impure embraces, together with all drunkenness, youthful lusts, abominable concupiscences, detestable adultery, and execrable pride. "For God," saith he, "resisteth the proud but giveth grace

[1] Wisdom xii. 12. [2] Psalm xix. 1. [3] Psalm cxxxix. 7.
[4] Deut. xxxii. 8, 9. [5] Deut. iv. 34. [6] Num. xxvii.

to the hnmble."[1] Let us therefore hold fast to those to whom God has given His grace. And let us put on concord: being humble, temperate, free from all whispering and detraction, and justified by our actions, and not our words. For He saith, "Doth he that speaketh and heareth many things, and that is of a ready tongue, suppose that he is righteous? Blessed is he that is born of a woman that liveth but a few days: use not therefore much speech." Let our praise be of God, not of ourselves; for God hateth those that commend themselves. Let the witness of our good actions be given to us of others, as it was given to the holy men that went before us. Rashness, and arrogance, and confidence, belong to them who are accursed of God; but equity, and humility, and mildness, to such as are blessed by Him.

XXXI. Let us then lay hold of His blessing, and let us consider what are the ways by which we may attain unto it. Let us look back upon those things that have happened from the beginning. For what was our father Abraham blessed? Was it not because that, through faith, he wrought righteousness and truth? Isaac, being fully persuaded of what he knew was to come, cheerfully yielded himself up for a sacrifice. Jacob with humility departed out of his own country, fleeing from his brother, and went unto Laban, and served him: and so the sceptre of the twelve tribes of Israel was given unto him.

XXXII. Now, what the greatness of this gift was will plainly appear, if we shall take the pains distinctly to consider all the parts of it; for from him came the priests and Levites, who all ministered at the altar of God; from him came our Lord Jesus Christ, according to the flesh; from him came the kings, and princes, and rulers in Judah; nor were the rest of his tribes in any small glory; God having promised that "thy seed [says he] shall be as the stars of heaven."[2] They were all therefore greatly glorified, not for their own sake, or for their own works, or for the righteousness that they themselves wrought, but through his will. And we also, being called by the same will in Christ Jesus, are not justified by ourselves, neither by our own wisdom, or knowledge, or piety, or the works which we have done in the holiness of our hearts: but by that faith by which God Al-

[1] Ja. iv. 6; 1 Pet. v. 3. [2] Gen. xxii. 17.

mighty has justified all men from the beginning: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

XXXIII. What shall we do therefore, brethren? Shall we be slothful in well-doing, and lay aside our charity? God forbid that any such thing should be done by us! But rather let us hasten, with all earnestness and readiness of mind, to perfect every good work; for even the Creator and Lord of all things Himself rejoices in His own works. By His almighty power He fixed the heavens, and by His incomprehensible wisdom He adorned them: He also divided the earth from the water, with which it is encompassed; and fixed it, as a secure tower, upon the foundation of His own will: He also, by His appointment, commanded all the living creatures that are upon it to exist: so likewise the sea, and all the creatures that are in it, having first created them, He inclosed them therein by His power. And above all, He with His holy and pure hands formed man—the most excellent, and, as to his understanding, truly the greatest of all earthly creatures—the character of His own image. For so God says, "Let us make man in our image, after our own likeness: so God created man, male and female created He them."[1] And, having thus finished all these things, He commended all that He had made, and blessed them; and said, "Increase and multiply."[2] We see how all righteous men have been adorned with good works; wherefore even the Lord Himself, having adorned Himself with His works, rejoiced. Having therefore such an example, let us without delay fulfil His will, and with all our strength work the work of righteousness.

XXXIV. The good workman with confidence receives the bread of his labour; but the sluggish and lazy cannot look him in the face that sets him on work. We must therefore be ready and forward in well-doing; for from Him are all things. And thus he foretels us, "Behold, the Lord cometh, and His reward is with Him, even before His face, to render to everyone according to his work."[3] He warns us therefore beforehand with all His heart, to this end, that we should not be slothful or negligent in well-doing. Let our boasting, therefore, and our confidence be in God; let us submit ourselves to His will. Let us consider the whole multitude of His

[1] Gen. xxvi. 27. [2] Gen. i. 28. [3] Isaiah xl. 10; lxii. 11.

angels, how ready they stand to minister unto His will; as saith the Scripture, "Thousands of thousands stood before Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand ministered unto Him."[1] "And they cried, saying, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Sabaoth![2] The whole earth is full of His glory!" Wherefore let us also, being conscientiously gathered together in concord with one another, as it were with one mouth cry earnestly unto Him, that He would make us partakers of His great and glorious promises. For He saith, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for them that wait for him."[3]

XXXV. How blessed and wonderful, beloved, are the gifts of God!—life in immortality—brightness in righteousness—truth in full assurance—faith in confidence—temperance in holiness! And all this has God subjected to our understandings: what, therefore, shall those things be which He has prepared for them that wait for Him? The Creator and Father of spirits, the Most Holy, He only knows both the greatness and beauty of them. Let us therefore strive with all earnestness, that we may be found in the number of those that wait for Him; that so we may receive the reward which He has promised. But how, beloved, shall we do this? We must fix our minds by faith towards God, and seek those things that are pleasing and acceptable unto Him. We must act conformably to His holy will, and follow the way of truth, casting off from us all unrighteousness and iniquity, together with all covetousness, strife, evil manners, deceit, whispering, detractions, all hatred of God, pride and boasting, vain-glory and ambition: for they that do these things are odious to God; and not only they that do them, but also "all such as approve of those that do them."[4] For thus saith the Scripture, "But unto the wicked God said, What hast thou to do to declare My statutes, or that thou shouldst take My covenant in thy mouth; seeing Thou hatest instruction, and castest My words behind thee? When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers. Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit. Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother;

[1] Dan. vii. 10. [2] Isa. xi. 3. [3] Isa. lxiv. 4; 1 Cor. ii. 9. [4] Rom. i. 32.

thou slanderest thine own mother's son. These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes. Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver. Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me: and to him that disposeth his way aright will I show the salvation of God."[1]

XXXVI. This is the way, beloved, in which we may find our Saviour, even Jesus Christ, the high priest of all our offerings, the defender and helper of our weakness. By Him we look up to the highest heavens, and behold as in a glass His spotless and most excellent visage. By Him are the eyes of our hearts opened; by Him our foolish and darkened understanding rejoiceth to behold His wonderful light. By Him would God have us to taste the knowledge of immortality, "who, being the brightness of His glory, is by so much greater than the angels as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."[2] For so it is written, "Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire."[3] But to His Son thus saith the Lord, "Thou art My Son, to-day have I begotten Thee."[4] "Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for Thy possession."[5] And again He saith unto Him, "Sit Thou on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool."[6] But who are His enemies? Even the wicked, and such who oppose their own wills to the will of God.

XXXVII. Let us therefore march on, men and brethren, with all earnestness in His holy laws. Let us consider those who fight under our earthly governors; how orderly, how readily, and with what exact obedience, they perform those things that are commanded them! all are not generals, nor colonels, nor captains, nor inferior officers; but every one, in his respective rank, does what is commanded him by the King, and those who have the authority over him. They who are great cannot subsist without those that are little; nor the little without the great. But there must be a mixture in all things; and then there will be use and profit too. Let us, for

[1] Psal. l. 16, &c., according to the Hebrew.
[2] Heb. i. 3, 4.
[3] Psalm civ. 4; Heb. i. 7.
[4] Heb. i. 5.
[5] Comp. Psal. ii. 7, 8.
[6] Heb. i. 13. Psal. cx. 1.

example, take our body: the head without the feet is nothing, neither the feet without the head;[1] and even the smallest members of our body are yet both necessary and useful to the whole body. But all conspire together and are subject to one common use, namely, the preservation of the whole body.

XXXVIII. Let therefore our whole body be saved in Jesus Christ: and let every one be subject to his neighbour, according to the order in which he is placed by the gift of God. Let not the strong man despise the weak; and let the weak see that he reverence the strong. Let the rich man distribute to the necessity of the poor; and let the poor bless God that he has given unto him by whom his want may be supplied. Let the wise man shew forth his wisdom, not in words but in good works. Let him that is humble not bear witness to himself, but let him leave it to another to bear witness of him. Let him that is pure in the flesh not grow proud of it, knowing that it was from another that he perceived the gift of continence. Let us consider therefore, brethren, whereof we are made—who, and what kind of men we came into the world, as it were out of a sepulchre, and from utter darkness. He that made us, and formed us, brought us into His own world, prevented us with His benefits even before we were born. Wherefore, having received all these things from Him, we ought, in every thing, to give thanks unto Him; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

XXXIX. Foolish and unwise men, who have neither prudence nor learning, may mock and deride us, being willing to set up themselves in their own conceits. "But what can a mortal man do? Or what strength is there in him that is made out of the dust?" For it is written, "There was no shape before mine eyes: only I heard a sound and a voice. For what? Shall man be pure before the Lord? Shall he be blameless in his works? Behold, He trusteth not in His servants; and His angels He charged with folly. Yea, the heaven is not clean in His sight; how much less they that dwell in houses of clay, of which also we ourselves were made! He smote them as a moth; and from morning even unto the evening they endure not. Because they were not able to help themselves they perished: He breathed upon them, and they

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 13.

died, because they had no wisdom."—"Call now,[1] if there be any that will answer thee; and to which of the angels wilt thou look? For wrath killeth the foolish man, and envy slayeth him that is in error. I have seen the foolish taking root; but lo! their habitation was presently consumed. Their children were far from safety; they perished at the gates of those who were lesser than themselves; and there was no man to help them. For what was prepared for them the righteous did eat; and they shall not be delivered from evil."

XL. Seeing then these things are manifest unto us, it will behove us to take care that, looking into the depths of the divine knowledge, we do all things in order whatsoever our Lord has commanded us to do; and particularly, that we perform our offerings and service to God, at their appointed seasons; for these He has commanded to be done, not rashly and disorderly, but at certain determinate times and hours, and therefore He has ordained, by His supreme will and authority, both where, and by what persons, they are to be performed—that so, all things being piously done unto all well-pleasing, they may be acceptable unto Him. They therefore who make their offerings at the appointed seasons are happy and accepted; because that, obeying the commandments of the Lord, they are free from sin. "And the same care must be had of the persons that minister unto Him:" for the chief priest has his proper services; and to the priests their proper place is appointed; and to the Levites appertain their proper ministers; and the layman is confined within the bounds of what is commanded to laymen.

XLI. Let every one of you therefore, brethren, bless God in his proper station, with a good conscience, and with all gravity, not exceeding the rule of his service that is appointed to him. The daily sacrifices are not offered everywhere, nor the peace-offerings, nor the sacrifices appointed for sins and transgressions, but only at Jerusalem; nor in any place there, but only at the altar before the temple; that which is offered being first diligently examined by the high priest and the other ministers we before mentioned. They therefore who do anything which is not agreeable to His will are punished with death. Consider, brethren, that by how much the better knowledge God has vouchsafed unto us, by so much the greater danger are we exposed to.

[1] Job v. 1, &c.

XLII. The apostles have preached to us from our Lord Jesus Christ; Jesus Christ from God. Christ therefore was sent by God, the apostles by Christ: so both were orderly sent, according to the will of God.[1] For having received their command, and being thoroughly assured by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and convinced by the word of God, with the fulness of the Holy Spirit, they went abroad, publishing that the kingdom of God was at hand. And thus, preaching through countries and cities, they appointed the first fruits of their conversions to be bishops and ministers over such as should afterwards believe, having first proved them by the Spirit. Nor was this any new thing, seeing that long before it was written concerning bishops and deacons. For thus saith the Scripture in a certain place,[2] "I will appoint their overseers in righteousness, and their ministers in faith."

XLIII. And what wonder if they, to whom such a work was committed by God in Christ, established such officers as we before mentioned, when even that blessed and faithful servant in all His house, Moses, set down in the Holy Scriptures all things that were commanded him? Whom also all the rest of the prophets followed, bearing witness with one consent to those things that were appointed by him: for he, perceiving an emulation to arise among the tribes concerning the priesthood, and that there was a strife about it, which of them should be adorned with that glorious name, commanded their twelve captains to bring to him twelve rods;[3] every tribe being written upon its rod, according to its name. And he took them and bound them together, and sealed them with the seals of the twelve princes of the tribes; and laid them up in the tabernacle of witness, upon the table of God. And, when he had shut the door of the tabernacle, he sealed up the keys of it in like manner as he had done the rods; and said unto them, Men and brethren, Whichsoever tribe shall have its rod blossom, that tribe has God chosen to perform the office of a priest, and to minister unto Him in holy things. And, when the morning was come, he called together all Israel, six hundred thousand men, and showed to their princes the seals, and opened the tabernacle of witness, and brought forth the rods. And the rod of Aaron was found not only to have blossomed, but also to have fruit upon it. What think you, beloved? did

[1] 1 Thess. i. 5. [2] Isa. lx. 17. [3] Numb. xvii.

not Moses before know what should happen? Yes, verily; but, to the end there might be no division nor tumult in Israel, he did in this manner, that the name of the true and only God might be glorified: to Him be honour for ever and ever. Amen.

XLIV. So likewise our apostles knew, by our Lord Jesus Christ, that there should contentions arise upon account of the ministry. And therefore, having a perfect foreknowledge of this, they appointed persons, as we have before said, and then gave direction, how, when they should die, other chosen and approved men should succeed in their ministry. Wherefore we cannot think that those may justly be thrown out of their ministry who were either appointed by them, or afterwards chosen by other eminent men, with the consent of the whole church, and who with all lowliness and innocency ministered to the flock of Christ, in peace and without self-interest, and were for a long time commended by all. For it would be no small sin in us, should we cast off those from their ministry who holily and without blame, fulfil the duties of it. Blessed are those priests who, having finished their course before these times, have obtained a fruitful and perfect dissolution, for they have no fear lest any one should turn them out of the place which is now appointed for them. But we see how you have put out some who lived reputably among you from the ministry, which by their innocence they had adorned.

XLV. Ye are contentious, brethren, and zealous for things that pertain not unto salvation. Look into the Holy Scriptures, which are the true words of the Holy Ghost. Ye know that there is nothing unjust or counterfeit written in them. There you shall not find that righteous men were ever cast off by such as were good themselves. They were persecuted, it is true, but it was by the wicked and unjust: they were cast into prison, but they were cast in by those that were unholy: they were stoned, but it was by transgressors; they were killed, but by accursed men, and such as had taken up an unjust envy against them. And all these things they underwent gloriously. For what shall we say, brethren? Was Daniel cast into the den[1] of lions by men fearing God? Ananias, Azarias, and Misael, were they cast into the fiery furnace[2] by men professing the excellent and glorious

[1] Dan. vi. 16.

[2] Dan. iii. 20.

worship of the Most High? God forbid! What kind of persons then were they that did these things? They were men abominable, full of all wickedness, who were incensed to so great a degree as to bring those into sufferings who with a holy and unblameable purpose of mind worshipped God; not knowing that the Most High is the protector and defender of all such as with a pure conscience serve His holy name: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. But they who with a full persuasion have endured these things are made partakers of glory and honour; and are exalted and lifted up by God, in their memorial throughout all ages. Amen.

XLVI. Wherefore it will behove us also, brethren, to follow such examples as these; for it is written, "Hold fast to such as are holy; for they that do so shall be sanctified." And again in another place He saith,[1] "With the pure thou shalt be pure [and with the elect thou shalt be elect], but with the perverse man thou shalt be perverse." Let us therefore join ourselves to the innocent and righteous; for such are the elect of God. Wherefore are there strifes, and anger, and divisions, and schisms, and wars, among us? Have we not all one God and one Christ?[2] Is not one Spirit of grace poured out among us all?[3] Have we not one calling in Christ? Why then do we rend and tear in pieces the members of Christ, and raise seditions against our own body: and are come to such a height of madness as to forget that we were "members one of another?"[4] Remember the words of our Lord Jesus, how He said, "Woe to that man [by whom offences came]![5] It were better for him that he had never been born, than that he should have offended one of My elect. It were better for him that a millstone thould be tied about his neck, and he should be cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of My little ones." Your schism has perverted many, has discouraged many; it has caused diffidence in many, and grief in us all. And yet your sedition continues still.

XLVII. Take the epistle of the blessed Paul the apostle into your hands. What was it that he wrote to you at the first preaching of the gospel among you? Verily he did by the Spirit admonish you concerning himself, and Cephas, and Apollos, because that even then ye had begun to fall into

[1] Psal. xvii. 2. [2] Eph. iv. 4. [3] 1 Cor. xii.
[4] Rom xii. 5. [5] Luke xvii.

parties and factions among yourselves. Nevertheless your partiality then led you into a much less sin, forasmuch as ye placed your affections upon apostles, men of eminent reputation in the church; and upon another who was greatly tried and approved of by them. But consider, we pray you, who were they that have now led you astray, and lessened the reputation of that brotherly love that was so eminent among you? It is a shame, my beloved, yea a very great shame, and unworthy of your Christian profession, to hear that the most firm and ancient church of the Corinthians should, by one or two persons, be led into a sedition against its priests. And this report is come not only to us, but to those also that differ from us; insomuch that the name of the Lord is blasphemed through your folly, and even ye yourselves are brought into danger by it.

XLVIII. Let us, therefore, with all haste, put an end to this sedition; and let us fall down before the Lord, and beseech Him with tears that He would be favourably reconciled to us, and restore us again to a seemly and holy course of brotherly love. For this is the gate of righteousness, opening unto life: as it is written, "Open unto me the gates of righteousness; I will go in unto them, and will praise the Lord. This is the gate of the Lord; the righteous shall enter into it."[1] Although therefore many gates are opened, yet this gate of righteousness is that gate in Christ at which blessed are all they that enter in, and direct their way in holiness and righteousness, doing all things without disorder. Let a man be faithful; let him be powerful in the utterance of knowledge; let him be wise in making an exact judgment of words; let him be pure in all his actions; but still by how much the more he seems to be above others by reason of these things, by so much the more will it behove him to be humble-minded, and to seek what is profitable to all men and not his own advantage.

XLIX. He that has the love that is in Christ, let him keep the commandments of Christ. For who is able to express the obligation of the love of God? What man is sufficient to declare as is fitting the excellency of its beauty? The height to which charity leads is inexpressible. Charity unites us to God: charity "covers the multitude of sins:"[2] charity "en-

[1] Psalm cxviii. 19, 20. [2] 1 Pet. iv. 8.

dures all things,"[1] is long-suffering in all things. There is nothing base and sordid in charity: charity lifts not itself up above other; admits of no divisions; is not seditious, but does all things in peace and concord. By charity were all the elect of God made perfect: without it nothing is pleasing and acceptable in the sight of God. Through charity did the Lord join us unto Himself; whilst, for the love that He bore towards us, our Lord Jesus Christ gave His own blood for us, by the will of God—His flesh for our flesh, His soul for our souls.

L. Ye see, beloved, how great and wonderful a thing charity is, and how that no expressions are sufficient to declare its perfection. But who is fit to be found in it? Even such only as God shall vouchsafe to make so. Let us, therefore pray to Him, and beseech Him that we may be worthy of it: that so we may live in charity, being unblamable, without human propensities, without respect of persons. All the ages of the world, from Adam even unto this day, are passed away; but they who have been made perfect in love have, by the grace of God, obtained a place among the righteous, and shall be made manifest in the judgment of the kingdom of Christ. For it is written, "Enter into thy chambers for a little space, till My anger and indignation shall pass away: and I will remember the good day, and will raise you up out of your graves."[2] Happy then shall we be, beloved, if we shall have fulfilled the commandments of God, in the unity of love: that so, through love, our sins may be forgiven us. For so it is written, "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth no sin, and in whose mouth there is no guile."[3] Now this blessing is fulfilled in those who are chosen by God, through Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

LI. Let us, therefore, as many as have transgressed by any of the suggestions of the adversary, beg God's forgiveness. And, as for those who have been the heads of the sedition and faction among you, let them look to the common end of our hope. For as many as are endued with fear and charity would rather they themselves should fall into trials than their neighbours, and choose to be themselves condemned rather than that the good and just charity delivered to us should

[1] 1 Cor. xiii. 7, &c. [2] Isa. xxvi. 20. [3] Psal. xxxii.

suffer. For it is seemly for a man to confess wherein he has transgressed, and not to harden his heart, as the hearts of those were hardened who raised up sedition against Moses, the servant of God; whose punishment was manifest unto all men, for they went down alive[1] into the grave, death swallowed them up. Pharaoh[2] and his host, and all the rulers of Egypt, their chariots also, and their horsemen, were for no other cause drowned in the bottom of the Red Sea, and perished; but because they hardened their foolish hearts, after so many signs done in the land of Egypt, by Moses the servant of God.

LII. Beloved, God is not indigent of any thing; nor does He demand any thing of us, but that we should confess our sins unto Him. For so says the holy David, "I will confess unto the Lord, and it shall please Him better than a young bullock that hath horns and hoofs."[3] "Let the poor see it and be glad." And again he saith, "Offer unto God the sacrifice of praise, and pay thy vows unto the Most High. And call upon Me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me."[4] "The sacrifice of God is a broken spirit."[5]

LIII. Ye know, beloved, ye know full well, the Holy Scriptures, and have thoroughly searched into the oracles of God. Call them, therefore, to your remembrance; for when Moses went up into the mount, and tarried there forty days and forty nights in fasting and humiliation, God said unto him, "Arise, Moses,[6] get thee down quickly from hence; for thy people whom thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt have committed wickedness; they have soon transgressed the way that I commanded them, and have made to themselves graven images. And the Lord said unto him, I have spoken unto thee several times, saying, I have seen this people, and behold it is a stiff-necked people; let me therefore destroy them, and put out their names from under heaven: and I will make unto thee a great and a wonderful nation, that shall be much larger than this. But Moses said, Not so, Lord: forgive now this people their sin; or, if thou wilt not, blot me also out of the book of the living." O admirable charity! O insuperable perfection! The servant speaks freely to his Lord: he beseeches him

[1] Numb. xvi. [2] Exod. iv. [3] Psal. lxix. 31.
[4] Psal. l. 14. [5] Psal. li. 17. [6] Exod. xxxii.; Deut. ix.

either to forgive the people, or to destroy him together with them.

LIV. Who is there among you that is generous? who that is compassionate? who that has any charity? Let him say, if this sedition, this contention, and these schisms, be upon my account, I am ready to depart, to go away whithersoever ye please, and do whatsoever ye shall command me: only let the flock of Christ be in peace with the elders that are set over it. He that shall do this shall get to himself a very great honour in the Lord; and there is no place but what will be ready to receive him: for "the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof."[1] These things they who have their conversation towards God, not to be repented of, both have done and will always be ready to do.

LV. Nay, and even the Gentiles themselves have given us examples of this kind: for we read how many kings and princes, in times of pestilence, being warned by their oracles, have given up themselves unto death, that by their own blood they might deliver their country from destruction. Others have forsaken their cities, that so they might put an end to the seditions of them. We know how many, among ourselves, have given up themselves unto bonds, that thereby they might free others from them: others have sold themselves into bondage, that they might feed their brethren with the price of themselves: and even many women, being strengthened by the grace of God, have done many glorious and manly things on such occasions. The blessed Judith,[2] when her city was besieged, desired the elders that they would suffer her to go into the camp of their enemies, and she went out, exposing herself to danger, for the love she bare to her country and her people that were besieged; and the Lord delivered Holofernes into the hands of a woman. Nor did Esther,[3] being perfect in faith, expose herself to any less hazard, for the delivery of the twelve tribes of Israel in danger of being destroyed; for by fasting and humbling herself, she entreated the great Maker of all things, the God of spirits, so that beholding the humility of her soul, He delivered the people for whose sake she was in peril.

LVI. Wherefore let us also pray for such as are fallen into sin: that, being endued with humility and moderation, they

[1] Psal. xxiv. [2] Judith viii. ix. x. xiii. [3] Esther vii. viii.

may submit, not unto us, but to the will of God. For by this means they shall obtain a fruitful and perfect remembrance, with mercy, both in our prayers to God, and in our mention of them before His saints. Let us receive correction, at which no man ought to repine. Beloved, the reproof and the correction which we exercise towards one another is good, and exceedingly profitable; for it unites us the more closely to the will of God. For so says the Holy Scripture, "the Lord corrected me, but He did not deliver me over unto death."[1] "For whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth."[2] "The righteous," saith he, "shall instruct me in mercy, and reprove me; but let not oil of sinners make fat my head."[3] And again he saith, "Happy is the man whom God correcteth; therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty. For He maketh sore and bindeth up; He woundeth and His hands make whole. He shall deliver thee in six troubles; yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee. In famine He shall redeem thee from death; and in war from the power of the sword. Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue; neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh. Thou shalt laugh at the wicked and sinners; neither shalt thou be afraid of the beasts of the earth. The wild beasts shall be at peace with thee: then shalt thou know that thy house shall be in peace; and the habitation of thy tabernacle shall not err. Thou shalt know also that thy seed shall be great, and thy offspring as the grass of the earth. Thou shalt come to thy grave as the ripe corn that is taken in due time, like as a shock of corn cometh in in its season."[4] Ye see, beloved, how there shall be a defence to those that are corrected of the Lord; for, being a good instructor, He is willing to admonish us by His holy discipline.

LVII. Do ye, therefore, who laid the first foundation of this sedition, submit yourselves unto your priests; and be instructed unto repentance, bending the knees of your hearts. Learn to be subject, laying aside all proud and arrogant boasting of your tongues; for it is better for you to be found little, and approved in the sheepfold of Christ, than to seem to yourselves better than others, and be cast out of His fold.

[1] Psal. cxviii. 18. [2] Prov. iii. 11. [3] Psal. cxli. 5.
[4] Job v. 17, &c.

For thus speaks the excellent and all-virtuous Wisdom, "Behold, I will pour out the word of My spirit upon you; I will make known My speech unto you. Because I called, and ye would not hear,—I stretched out My words, and ye regarded not; but ye have set at nought all My counsel, and would none of my reproof,—I will also laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh. When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction as a whirlwind, when distress and anguish cometh upon you, then ye shall call upon Me, but I will not hear you. The wicked shall seek Me, but they shall not find Me; for that they hated knowledge, and did not seek the fear of the Lord. They would not hearken unto My counsel; they despised all My reproof: therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own ways, and be filled with their own wickedness." For because they robbed the simple they shall be slain; and an inquisition shall destroy the ungodly. But whoso hearkeneth unto Me shall dwell securely, and shall rest secure from all evil.[1]

LVIII. Let us therefore be obedient to His most holy and glorious Name, fleeing from the judgments thus foretold by the Wisdom[2] upon those who are disobedient, that we may dwell in safety, putting our trust in the most holy Name o His Majesty. Receive ye our counsel, and ye shall have none occasions of sorrow. For as God liveth and the Lord Jesus Christ liveth, and the Holy Spirit, the Faith and the Hope of the elect, so shall he who, in lowliness of mind with steadfast meekness, hath wrought without sorrow the judgments and statutes which are given by God, even he shall be enrolled and had in honour among the number of those who are saved through Jesus Christ, by whom is glory to Him for ever and ever. Amen.

LIX. But if some should be disobedient unto the things spoken from Him through us, let them know that they shall entangle themselves in no small transgression and danger, but we shall be guiltless of this sin. And we shall pray, earnestly making petition and supplication, that the Creator of all things will keep in perfect safety and unbroken the number which is without number of His elect in all the world, through His be-

[1] Prov. i. 32, 33, LXX.

[2] The name "Wisdom" was given to the Book of Proverbs, from which Clement has just been quoting.

loved Son Jesus Christ, by whom He called us out of darkness into light, out of ignorance to perfect knowledge of the glory of His Name.

Grant to us, O Lord, to have hope in Thy Name, which is the first cause of all creation; open the eyes of our heart to the knowledge of Thee, who alone dwellest the Most High in the highest places, Holy in the holy places, who bringest down the high looks of the proud, and bringest the counsels of the heathen to nought, and settest the lowly on high, and bringest down the proud, who makest rich and makest poor, who killest and makest alive, who alone art the benefactor of spirits and God of all flesh, Thou who lookest down into the depths, who art the Overseer of the works of men, the Succourer of those in peril, the Saviour of those without hope, the Creator and Bishop of every spirit, who dost multiply nations upon earth, and from them all hast chosen out those that love Thee through Jesus Christ, Thy Beloved Son, by whom Thou didst instruct, sanctify, honour us. We beseech Thee, Lord, be Thou our succour and our defender. Save those among us who are in affliction. Have mercy upon the humble. Raise up those who are fallen. Manifest Thyself to the needy. Heal the ungodly. Turn again the wanderers of Thy people. Feed the hungry. Set at liberty those of us that are bound. Raise up the weak. Comfort the faint-hearted. Make all the heathen to know that Thou art God alone, and that Jesus Christ is Thy Son, and that we are Thy people and the sheep of Thy pasture.

LX. Thou through Thy works didst make known the everlasting foundation of the world. Thou, O Lord, didst create the earth, Thou who art faithful throughout all generations, just in Thy judgments, wonderful in might and magnificence, Thou that art wise in creation and prudent in establishing the things that are made, Thou that art good in the things that are seen and faithful towards those who have trusted in Thee, merciful and full of compassion; forgive our evil doings and deeds of unrighteousness, and transgressions and errors. Reckon not every sin of Thy servants and handmaids, but cleanse us with the cleansing of Thy truth, and guide Thou our footsteps to walk in holiness and righteousness and singleness of heart, and to do those things that are good and well-pleasing in Thy sight and in the sight of our rulers. Yea,

Lord, shew Thy countenance upon us for good in peace, that we may be sheltered by Thy mighty hand and delivered from all sin by Thy lifted up arm, and deliver us from those who hate us unrighteously. Give oneness of mind and peace unto us and to all those that dwell on the earth, as Thou didst give to our forefathers who called upon Thee in holiness, in faith and truth, so that we may be saved as we become obedient to Thy Almighty and adorable Name.

LXI. Thou, Lord, hast given to our rulers and governors upon the earth the power of their sovereignty, through Thine exceeding and unutterable might, that we, knowing the glory and honour which is given unto them from Thee, may submit ourselves unto them, in no wise resisting Thy will. Give unto them, Lord, health, peace, oneness of mind, stability, that they may order the government which hath been committed to them of Thee without stumbling. For Thou, O Heavenly Lord, King of the ages, givest glory to the sons of men, and honour and power over the things which are upon the earth. Do Thou, O Lord, direct aright their counsel towards that which is good and well-pleasing in Thy sight, that ordering devoutly in peace and meekness the authority committed to them by Thee, they may obtain Thy mercy. O Thou Only Strong to do these things, and things far more exceeding good among us, we glorify Thee through the High Priest and Surety of our souls, Jesus Christ, through whom be the glory and the majesty unto Thee both now, and from generation to generation, and unto the ages of the ages. Amen.

LXII. Now concerning the things which belong unto our worship, and the things which are requisite for a virtuous life to those who desire to direct their wills in piety and righteousness, we have written to you in full, my brethren. For concerning faith and repentance, and true love and temperance, and sound mind and patience, we have examined each point, putting you in remembrance how ye ought to please Almighty God holily in righteousness and truth and long-suffering; being of one mind and not mindful of wrong; in love and peace with steadfast gentleness; even as also our fathers whose examples are before us, were well-pleasing, being lowly in mind towards their Father, and God, and Creator, and towards all men. And we have put you in mind of these things the more gladly, seeing that we knew well that we were

writing unto men faithful and had in honour, and who have studied diligently the oracles of the teaching of God.

LXIII. Therefore it is right for us, having been brought to the knowledge of so great and so many examples, to bow the neck, and having freely chosen the place of obedience, to join ourselves unto them who are the leaders of our souls, to the end that having ceased from this vain dissension, we may attain unto the mark which lieth before us in truth, keeping apart from every fault. For ye will afford joy and gladness to us if being obedient unto the things written by us through the Holy Ghost, ye cut off the unrighteous passion of your jealousy, according to the exhortation which we have made for peace and oneness in mind in this our letter. And we have also sent men, faithful and prudent, who have had their conversation unblameably among us from youth unto old age, who shall also be witnesses between you and us. And this have we done, that ye may know that there hath been and is in us every longing that ye may quickly be at peace.

LXIV. Now God, the overseer of all things, the Father of spirits, and the Lord of all flesh--who hath chosen our Lord Jesus Christ, and us by Him to be His peculiar people—grant to every soul of man that calleth upon His glorious and holy name, faith, fear, peace, long suffering, patience, temperance, holiness, and sobriety, unto all well-pleasing in His sight; through our high priest and protector Jesus Christ, by Whom be glory, and majesty, and power, and honour, unto Him, now and for evermore. Amen.

LXV. The messengers whom we have sent unto you—Claudius Ephebus, and Valerius Bito, with Fortunatus--send back to us again, with all speed, in peace and with joy, that they may the sooner acquaint us with your peace and concord, so much prayed for and desired by us, and that we may rejoice in your good order.

LXVI. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you, and with all that are any where called by God through Him, to whom be honour, and glory, and might, and majesty, and eternal dominion, by Christ Jesus, from everlasting to everlasting. Amen.

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SECOND EPISTLE OF ST CLEMENT

(SO CALLED).

I. BRETHREN, we ought so to think of Jesus Christ as of God—as of the Judge of the living and the dead: nor should we think any less of our salvation. For if we think meanly of Him, we shall hope only to receive some small things from Him. And, if we do so, we shall sin; not considering from whence we have been called, and by whom, and to what place; and how much Jesus Christ vouchsafed to suffer for our sakes. What recompense then shall we render unto Him? or what fruit that may be worthy of what He has given to us? For, indeed, how great are those advantages which we owe to Him in relation to our holiness! He has illuminated us; as a father He has called us His children: He has saved us who were lost and undone. What praise shall we give to Him, or what reward that may be answerable to those things which we have received? We were defective in our understandings; worshipping stones and wood, gold and silver, and brass, the works of men's hands; and our whole life was nothing else but death. Wherefore, being encompassed with darkness, and having such a mist before our eyes, we have looked up, and through His will have laid aside the cloud wherewith we were surrounded. For He had compassion upon us, and, being moved in His bowels towards us, He saved us; having beheld in us much error, and destruction, and seen that we had no hope of salvation but only through Him. For He called us who were not, and was pleased from nothing to give us a being.

II. "Rejoice, thou barren, that bearest not, break forth and cry, thou that travailest not; for she that is desolate hath many more children than she that hath an husband."[1] In that He said, "Rejoice, thou barren, that bearest not," He spake of us; for our Church was barren before that children were given unto it. And again, when He said, "cry, thou that travailest not," He implied thus much: that, after the manner of women in travail, we should not cease to put up our prayers unto God abundantly.[2] And for what follows, "because she that is desolate hath more children than she that hath an husband:"[3] it was therefore added, because our people which seemed to have been forsaken by God, now believing in Him, are become more than they who seemed to have God. And another Scripture saith, "I came not to call the righteous but sinners [to repentance]."[4] The meaning of which is this, that those who were lost must be saved. For that is indeed truly great and wonderful, not to confirm those things that are yet standing, but those which are falling. Even so did it seem good to Christ to save what was lost; and when He came into the world He saved many, and called us who were already lost.

III. Seeing then He had showed so great mercy towards us, and chiefly for that we who are alive do now no longer sacrifice to dead gods, nor pay any worship to them, but have by Him been brought to the knowledge of the Father of truth; whereby shall we show that we do indeed know Him, but by not denying Him by whom we have come to the knowledge of Him? For even He Himself saith, "Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him will I confess before My Father."[5] This therefore is our reward, if we shall confess Him by whom we have been saved. But wherein must we confess Him? Namely, in doing those things which He saith, and not disobeying His commandments—by worshipping Him not with our lips only, but with all our heart, and with all our mind; for He saith in Isaiah, "This people honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me."[6]

IV. Let us then not only call Him Lord; for that will not save us. For He saith, "Not every one that saith unto Me,

[1] Isa. liv. 1. [2] Ἀπλῶς. See St James i. 5.
[3] Compare Rom. xii. 8; 2 Cor. viii. 2; ix. 11, 13. [4] Matt. ix. 13.
[5] Matt. x. 32. [6] Isa. xxix. 13.

Lord, Lord, shall be saved, but he that doth righteousness."[1] Wherefore, brethren, let us confess Him by our works; by loving one another; in not committing adultery, not speaking evil against each other, not envying one another, but by being temperate, merciful, good. Let us also have a mutual sense of one another's sufferings, and not be covetous of money; but let us by our good works confess God, and not by those that are otherwise. Also, let us not fear men, but rather God. Wherefore if we should do such wicked things, the Lord hath said, Though ye should be joined unto Me, even in My very bosom, and not keep My commandments, I would cast you off, and say unto you, "Depart from Me; I know not whence you are, ye workers of iniquity."[2]

V. Wherefore, brethren, leaving willingly for conscience' sake our sojourning in this world, let us do the will of Him who has called us, and not fear to depart out of this world. For the Lord saith, "Ye shall be as sheep in the midst of wolves. Peter answered and said, What if the wolves shall tear in pieces the sheep? Jesus said unto Peter, Let not the sheep fear the wolves after death.[3] And ye also fear not those that kill you, and after that have no more that they can do unto you; but fear Him who, after you are dead, has power to cast both soul and body into hell-fire."[4] For consider, brethren, that the sojourning of this flesh in the present world is but little, and of a short continuance; but the promise of Christ is great and wonderful, even the rest of the kingdom that is to come, and of eternal life. What then must we do that we may attain unto it? We must order our conversation holily and righteously, and look upon all the things of this world as none of ours, and not desire them. For, if we desire to possess them, we fall from the way of righteousness.

VI. For thus saith the Lord, "No servant can serve two masters."[5] If, therefore, we shall desire to serve God and Mammon, it will be without profit to us. "For what will it profit if one gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"[6] Now this world, and that to come, are two enemies. This speaketh of adultery and corruption, of covetousness and deceit; but that renounceth these things. We cannot therefore be the friends of both; but we must resolve, by forsaking

[1] Matt. vii. 21. [2] Matt. vii. 23; Luke xiii. 27. [3] Matt. x. 16.
[4] Luke xii. 4, 5. [5] Luke xvi. 13. [6] Matt. xvi. 26.

the one, to enjoy the other. And we think it is better to hate the present things, as little, short-lived, and corruptible; and to love those which are to come, which are truly good and incorruptible. For if we do the will of Christ we shall find rest; but if not, nothing shall deliver us from eternal punishment if we shall disobey His commands. For even thus saith the Scripture in the prophet Ezekiel, "If Noah, Job, and Daniel should rise up,"[1] they shall not deliver their children in captivity. Wherefore, if such righteous men are not able by their righteousness to deliver their children, how can we hope to enter into the kingdom of God, except we keep our baptism holy and undefiled? Or who shall be our advocate, unless we shall be found to have done what is holy and just?

VII. Let us therefore, my brethren, contend with all earnestness, knowing that our combat is at hand, and that many go long voyages to encounter for a corruptible reward; and yet all are not crowned, but they only that labour much, and strive gloriously. Let us therefore so contend that we may all be crowned. Let us run in the straight road the race that is incorruptible; and let us in great numbers pass unto it, and strive that we may receive the crown. But and if we cannot all be crowned, let us come as near to it as we are able. Moreover, we must consider that he who contends in a corruptible combat, if he be found doing any thing that is not fair, is taken away and scourged, and cast out of the lists. What think ye then that he shall suffer who does any thing that is not fitting in the combat of immortality? Thus speaks the prophet concerning those who keep not their seal: "Their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched; and they shall be for a spectacle unto all flesh."[2]

VIII. Let us therefore repent whilst we are yet upon the earth; for we are as clay in the hand of the artificer. For as the potter, if he make a vessel, and it be turned amiss in his hands, or broken, again forms it anew; but if he have gone so far as to throw it into the furnace of fire, he can no more bring any remedy to it,—so we, whilst we are in this world, should repent, with our whole heart, for whatsoever evil we have done in the flesh, while we have yet the time of repentance, that we may be saved by the Lord. For after we shall have departed

[1] Ezek. xiv. 14, 20.

[2] Isaiah lxvi. 24.

out of this world, we shall no longer be able either to confess our sins, or repent in the other. Wherefore, brethren, let us, doing the will of the Father, and keeping our flesh pure, and observing the commandments of the Lord, lay hold on eternal life; for the Lord saith in the Gospel, "If ye have not kept that which was little, who will give you that which is great? For I say unto you, he that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much."[1] This therefore is what He saith: Keep your bodies pure, and your seal without spot, that ye may receive eternal life.

IX. And let not any one among you say that this very flesh is not judged, neither raised up. Consider in what were ye saved: in what did ye look up, if not whilst ye were in this flesh? We must therefore keep our flesh as the temple of God. For in like manner as ye were called in the flesh, ye shall also come to judgment in the flesh. Our one Lord Jesus Christ, who has saved us, being first a spirit, was made flesh, and so called us. Even so we also shall in this flesh receive the reward. Let us therefore love one another, that we may attain unto the kingdom of God. Whilst we have time to be healed, let us deliver up ourselves to God our physician, giving our reward unto Him. And what reward shall we give? Repentance out of a pure heart; for He knows all things beforehand, and searches out our very hearts. Let us therefore give praise unto Him, not only with our mouths, but with all our souls; that He[2] may receive us as children. For so the Lord hath said, "They are My brethren who do the will of My Father."

X. Wherefore, my brethren, let us do the will of the Father, who hath called us, that we may live. Let us pursue virtue, and forsake wickedness, which leadeth us into sins; and let us flee all ungodliness, that evils overtake us not. For if we shall do our diligence to live well, peace shall follow us. And yet how hard is it to find a man that does this! For almost all are led by human fears, choosing rather the present enjoyments than the future promise. For they know not how great a torment the present enjoyments bring with them, nor what delights the future promise. And if they themselves only did this, it might the more easily be endured; but now they go on to infect innocent souls with their evil doctrines, not knowing

[1] Luke xvi. 20. [2] Matt. xii. 5.

that both themselves and those that hear them shall receive a double condemnation.

XI. Let us therefore serve God with a pure heart, and we shall be righteous: but if we shall not serve Him, because we do not believe the promise of God, we shall be miserable. For thus saith the prophet: "Miserable are the double-minded, who doubt in their heart, and say, These things we have heard, even in the time of our fathers, but we have seen none of them, though we have expected them from day to day. O ye fools! compare yourselves to a tree; take the vine for an example; first it sheds its leaves, then it buds, then come the sour grapes, then the ripe fruit. Even so My people has borne its disorders and afflictions, but shall hereafter receive good things." Wherefore, my brethren, let us not doubt in our minds, but let us expect with hope, that we may receive our reward; for He is faithful, who has promised that He will render to every one a reward according to his works. If therefore we shall do what is just in the sight of God, we shall enter into His kingdom, and shall receive the promises "which neither eye hath seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man."[1]

XII. Wherefore let us every hour expect the kingdom of God in love and righteousness; because we know not the day of God's appearing. [For the Lord Himself being asked by one, When His Kingdom should come, said, "When the two shall be one, and that which is without as that which is within, and the male with the female, neither male nor female."

Now the *two are one* when we speak truth to one another, and there is, without hypocrisy, one soul in two bodies. And by *the outward as the inward*, He meaneth this;—namely, He calleth the soul the inward, and the body He calleth the outward. In like manner, therefore, as thy body appeareth, so let thy soul be manifest in its good works. *And the male with the female, neither male nor female*, this meaneth that a brother beholding a sister shall in nowise think of her as a female, nor shall she think of him as a male.[2] As ye do these things, saith He, the Kingdom of My Father shall come.

XIII. Therefore, even now, brethren, let us repent. Let us recover ourselves unto that which is good, for we are full of much madness and evil. Let us wipe away from us our

[1] 1 Cor. ii. 9. [2] Evident ref. to Matt. xxii. 30; cf. Gal. iii. 28.

former sins, and repent with all our hearts, and be saved. And let us not be menpleasers, nor desirous only to please one another, but those men also who are without, by our righteous dealing, that the name of the Lord be not through us blasphemed. For the Lord saith, "Through you My Name is continually blasphemed among the Gentiles;"[1] and again, "Woe unto him through whom My Name is blasphemed." Wherein is it blasphemed? In that ye do not the things which I will. For the Gentiles, hearing from our mouth the oracles of God, marvel at them for their beauty and greatness, and then, coming to the knowledge of our works that they are not worthy of the words which we speak, they are inwardly turned to blasphemy, saying that what we tell is a fable and a deceit. For when they hear from us that God saith, "What thanks have ye if ye love them that love you? But there is thanks to you if ye love your enemies and them which hate you," when they hear these things they marvel at the exceeding goodness of them, but when they see that we not only love not them that hate us, but not even them that love us, then they laugh us to scorn, and His Name is blasphemed.

XIV. So then, brethren, doing the will of God our Father, we shall be of the Church which was from the beginning, that spiritual Church which was begotten before the sun and moon; but if we do not the will of the Lord, we shall be of that which the Scripture describeth, "My house is become a den of robbers."[2] So then, let us make choice to be of the Church of Life, that we may be saved. But I do not think that ye are ignorant that the living Church is the body of Christ. For the Scripture saith, *God made them male and female.*[3] The male is Christ, the female is the Church. And ye know that the Prophets and the Apostles teach that the Church is not of this present world, but from above. For she was spiritual, even as our Lord Jesus, but He was manifested in the last days that He might save us. And the Church being spiritual was manifested in the flesh of Christ, showing unto us that if any one of us shall guard her in his flesh and defile her not, he shall receive her again in the Holy Spirit; for the flesh itself is an antitype of the spirit; no man, therefore, who hath defiled the antitype shall partake of the reality. This, therefore, is what He meaneth, my brethren, guard the flesh that

[1] Is. lii. 5. [LXX.] [2] Jer. vii. 11. [3] Gen. i. 27.

ye may become partakers of the spirit. But if we say that the flesh is the Church and the spirit is Christ, then verily he who hath dishonoured the flesh hath dishonoured the Church; such an one, therefore, shall not be a partaker of the spirit, which is Christ. Of so great life and incorruption is this flesh able to partake, when the Holy Spirit is joined unto it. Neither can any man utter or declare the things which God hath prepared for His elect.

XV. I do not think that I have given a small counsel concerning temperance,[1] which whoso followeth shall not repent thereof, but shall save both himself and me his counsellor. For the reward is not small which consisteth in converting a wandering and lost soul, that it may be saved. For this is the reward that we are able to pay back unto the God who created us, if he who speaketh and heareth both speak and hear with faith and love. Let us therefore abide in the things which we believed, just and holy, that with boldness we may ask of God who saith, "Whilst thou art yet speaking, I will say, Behold, here I am."[2] For this word is the sign of a great promise, for the Lord declareth Himself more ready to give than we to pray. Being partakers, therefore, of so great benefit, let us not grudge ourselves in the obtaining of so many good things. For so great pleasure as these words have unto those who obey them, so great condemnation have they to them who obey not.

XVI. So then, beloved, having received no small opportunity unto repentance, let us redeem the time, and turn unto God who hath called us, while we yet have One who receiveth us. For if we bid farewell to these luxurious ways, and conquer our soul by not yielding to its evil lusts, we shall become partakers of the mercy of Jesus. For ye know that there cometh even now the day of judgment which shall burn as an oven, and all the earth shall be as lead melting in the fire, and then shall be made manifest both the hidden and open works of men. Beautiful, therefore, is almsgiving, even as repentance from sin. Better is Fasting than Prayer, but Almsgiving is better than both.[3] *Love covereth a multitude of sins.* But

[1] *I.e.* self-control; Greek, ἐγκράτεια. [2] Is. lviii. 9.

[3] Bishop Lightfoot supposes the text here to be corrupt. The Bishop also points out that there is an evident reference to Tobit xii. 8, 9. If the text is correct we may assume that the meaning is that practical Christianity is better than mere feeling and sentiment, that Faith can only become effectual through works.

prayer out of a good conscience delivereth from death. Blessed is every one that in these things is found full, for almsgiving removeth the burden of sin.

XVII. Let us, therefore, repent with all our heart, lest any man perish through heedlessness. For if we have commandments, that we should even make it our duty to turn men away from idols and teach them, how much the more ought not a soul that already knoweth God to be lost. Let us, therefore, assist one another, and strive to lead those that are weak to that which is good, that we one and all may be saved; and let us convert and admonish one another. And not only now let us resolve to give heed and believe, when we are being admonished by the elders, but also when we have gone back to our homes, let us remember the commandments of the Lord, and not be dragged away by worldly lusts, but coming hither very often let us endeavour to make progress in the commandments of the Lord, that all thinking the same thing we may be gathered together unto life. For the Lord said, *I come to gather together all the nations, tribes, and tongues*,[1] and this He saith of the day of His appearing, when He shall come and ransom us, each man according to his works. And the unbelievers shall see His glory and His might, and shall be astonished when they behold the kingdom of this world given into the hand of Jesus, and shall say, Woe unto us, for Thou art He, and we knew not nor believed, and we obeyed not the elders as they showed unto us the way of our salvation. And *their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched, and they shall be for an abhorring to all flesh.*[2] He calleth that the day of judgment, when men shall behold those who lived impiously amongst us, and who dealt falsely with the commandments of Jesus Christ. But the just, who have wrought righteousness and have sustained torments and have hated the luxurious pleasures of the soul, when they shall behold them that have gone astray and have denied Jesus by their words or by their deeds, how they are plagued with sore torments in fire unquenchable, shall give glory to their God, saying, There shall be hope for him who hath served God with all his heart.

XVIII. And let us therefore be of the number of those who give thanks, who have become servants to God, and let us not be of those who are judged unbelievers. For I myself also, being an exceeding great sinner and not yet escaped from tempta-

[1] Is. lxvi. 18. [2] Is. lxvi. 24.

tions, but being yet in the midst of the wiles of the Devil, do use all diligence to follow after righteousness, that I may prevail at least to draw near unto it, fearing the judgment to come.

XIX. So then, my brethren and sisters, now that ye have heard the words of the God of truth,[1] I read unto you an exhortation that ye may give heed unto the things that have been written, that ye may both save yourselves and him who readeth among you. For I ask of you a reward, even that ye repent with all your hearts, giving salvation and life unto yourselves. For in doing this we shall set up a mark before all the young who desire to labour lovingly for piety and for the goodness of God. And let us not take it hard and be discontented as foolish ones, when any one admonisheth us and turneth us away from unrighteousness to righteousness. For sometimes as we are practising evil deeds, we know it not because of the doublemindedness and unbelief which dwelleth in our breasts, and our understanding is darkened by our vain lusts. Let us therefore practise righteousness that we may be saved until the end. Blessed are they who obey these ordinances. Though for a short season they suffer affliction in the world, they shall gather in the immortal fruit of the Resurrection. Let not therefore the godly man be grieved if he suffer hardship in these present times; a blessed time awaiteth him; he will live again with the fathers above; he shall be full of joy in the world that hath no sorrow.]

XX. Nevertheless, by no means let this trouble your understanding, that we see the unjust grow rich, and the servants of God straitened. Let us believe, therefore, my brothers and sisters; we are striving in the cause of a living God, and are exercised by the life that now is that we may be crowned in that which is to come. No man among the just ones received his fruit quickly, but waiteth for it; for if God gave the reward of the just ones speedily, immediately we should be practising for merchandise, and not for the service of God; for we should be seeming to be righteous whilst we pursued not God's service but lucre. And for this cause, divine judgment arresteth a spirit that is not just, and loadeth it with chains.

To the only God invisible, Father of truth, who sent forth to us the Saviour and Prince of incorruption, by Whom also He made known to us the truth and the heavenly life, to Him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

[1] The sermon used to follow the reading of Holy Scripture.

THE SHEPHERD OF HERMAS

THE SHEPHERD OF HERMAS.

THERE was a Hermas at Rome to whom St Paul sent greeting (Rom. xvi. 14). It is uncertain whether he was the writer of the book before us. Origen, Tertullian, Irenæus, Eusebius, say, or imply that he was. Others say that the author was one Hermes of the following century, brother to Pope Pius I. Archbishop Wake thinks it was the former. The book was read in the worship of the congregation in the days of Irenæus; and Clement of Alexandria quotes it with respect. But its canonicity as Scripture in the same sense that the writings of the New Testament are Scripture seems never to have been held current. St Athanasius treats it as the Church of England treats the Apocrypha, calling it serviceable for catechetical instruction, but not canonical. The great Sinaitic MS. of the New Testament ("Codex ℵ.") contains it and the Epistle of Barnabas as an Appendix. Tertullian, in one of his writings, speaks of it respectfully, but in a work, written some years later, treats it with contempt.

Internal evidence tells us very little about the author. He is a mystic, and his book has been called "the *Pilgrim's Progress* of Ante-Nicene Times" (Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*). But there is this difference, that the Visions of Hermas do not form one continuous allegory; they are more like the separate visions shewn to Christian in the House of the Interpreter. They are curious no doubt, but the book is not one which is likely to attract strongly the reader in search of spiritual food, nor does it throw much light on the Church doctrine and practice of its time.

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THE FIRST BOOK OF HERMAS, WHICH IS CALLED HIS VISIONS.

Vision I.

Against filthy and proud thoughts: also the neglect of Hermas in chastising his children.

I. HE who had bred me up, sold a certain young maid at Rome; whom, when I saw many years after, I remembered her, and began to love her as a sister. It happened some time afterwards, that I saw her washing in the river Tiber; and I reached out my hand unto her, and brought her out of the river. And when I saw her, I thought with myself saying, how happy should I be if I had such a wife, both for beauty and manners. This I thought with myself; nor did I think any thing more. But not long after, as I was walking and musing on these thoughts, I began to honour this creature of God, thinking with myself how noble and beautiful she was. And when I had walked a little, I fell asleep. And the Spirit caught me away, and carried me through a certain place towards the right hand, through which no man could pass. It was a place among rocks, very steep, and unpassable for water. When I was past this place, I came into a plain; and there falling down upon my knees, I began to pray unto the Lord, and to confess my sins. And as I was praying, the heaven was opened, and I saw the woman which I had coveted, saluting me from heaven, and saying,

"Hermas, hail!" And I, looking upon her, answered, "Lady, what dost thou do here?" She answered me, "I am taken up hither to accuse thee of sin before the Lord." "Lady," said I, "wilt thou convince me?" "No," said she; "but hear the words which I am about to speak unto thee. God, who dwelleth in heaven, and hath made all things out of nothing, and hath multiplied them for His holy church's sake, is angry with thee, because thou hast sinned against me." And I answering, said unto her, "Lady, if I have sinned against thee, tell me where, or in what place, or when did I ever speak an unseemly or dishonest word unto thee? Have I not always esteemed thee as a lady? Have I not always reverenced thee as a sister? Why, then, dost thou imagine these wicked things against me?' Then she, smiling upon me, said, "The desire of naughtiness has risen up in thy heart. Does it not seem to thee to be an ill thing for a righteous man to have an evil desire rise up in his heart? It is indeed a sin, and that a very great one, to such a one; for a righteous man thinketh that which is righteous: and whilst he does so, and walketh uprightly, he shall have the Lord in heaven favourable unto him in all his business. But as for those who think wickedly in their hearts, they take to themselves death and captivity: and especially those who love this present world, and glory in their riches, and regard not the good things that are to come; their souls wander up and down, and know not where to fix. Now this is the case of such as are double-minded, who trust not in the Lord, and despise and neglect their own life. But do thou pray unto the Lord, and He will heal thy sins, and the sins of thy whole house, and of all His saints."

II. As soon as she had spoken these words, the heavens were shut, and I remained utterly swallowed up with sadness and fear; and said within myself, If this be laid against me for sin, how can I be saved? or how shall I ever be able to entreat the Lord for my many and great sins? with what words shall I beseech Him to be merciful unto me? As I was thinking over these things, and meditating in myself upon them, behold a chair was set over against me of the whitest wool, as bright as snow. And there came an old woman in a bright garment, having a book in her hand, and sat alone, and saluted me, saying, "Hermas, hail!" And I being full of

sorrow, and weeping, answered, "Hail, lady!" And she said unto me, "Why art thou sad, Hermas, who were wont to be patient and modest, and always cheerful?" I answered and said to her, "Lady, a reproach has been laid to my charge by an excellent woman, who tells me that I have sinned against her." She replied, "Far be any such thing from the servant of God. But it may be, the desire of her has risen up in thy heart; for indeed such a thought maketh the servants of God guilty of sin; nor ought such a detestable thought to be in the servant of God; nor should he who is approved by the Spirit desire that which is evil; but especially Hermas, who contains himself from all wicked lusts, and is full of all simplicity, and of great innocence.

III. "Nevertheless the Lord is not so much angry with thee for thine own sake, as upon the account of thy house, which has committed wickedness against the Lord, and against their parents. And for that, out of thy fondness towards thy sons, thou hast not admonished thy house, but hast permitted them to live wickedly: for this cause the Lord is angry with thee; but He will heal all the evils that are done in thy house. For through their sins and iniquities, thou art wholly consumed in secular affairs. But now the mercy of God hath taken compassion upon thee, and upon thine house, and hath greatly comforted thee. Only as for thee, do not wander; but be of an even mind, and comfort thy house. As the workman bringeth forth his work, offers it to whomsoever he pleases, so shalt thou, by teaching every day what is just, cut off a great sin. Wherefore cease not to admonish thy sons; for the Lord knows that they will repent with all their heart, and they shall be written in the book of life." And when she had said this, she added unto me, "Wilt thou hear me read?" I answered, "Lady, I will." "Hear, then," said she; and opening the book, she read gloriously, greatly, and wonderfully, such things as I could not keep in my memory; for they were terrible words, such as no man could bear. Howbeit, I committed her last words to my remembrance; for they were but few, and of great use to us. "Behold the mighty Lord, who by His invisible power, and with His excellent wisdom, made the world, and by His glorious counsel beautified His creature, and with the word of His strength fixed the heaven, and founded the earth upon the waters, and

by His mighty power established His holy church, which He hath blessed: behold, He will remove the heavens, and the mountains, the hills, and the seas; and all things shall be made plain for His elect; that He may render unto them the promise which He has promised, with much honour and joy; if so be that they shall keep the commandments of God, which they have received with great faith."

IV. And when she had made an end of reading, she rose out of the chair; and, behold, four young men came, and carried the chair to the east. And she called me unto her, and touched my breast, and said unto me, "Did my reading please thee?" I answered, "Lady, these last things please me, but what went before was severe and hard." She said unto me, "These last things are for the righteous, but the foregoing for the revolters and heathen." And as she was talking with me, two men appeared, and took her up on their shoulders, and went to the east, where the chair was. And she went cheerfully away; and as she was going, said unto me, "Hermas, be of good cheer."

Vision II.

Again, of his neglect in correcting his talkative wife; and of his lewd sons.

I. As I was on the way to Cumæ, about the same time that I went the year before, I began to call to mind the vision I formerly had. And again the Spirit carried me away, and brought me into the same place in which I had been the year before. And when I was come into the place, I fell down upon my knees, and began to pray unto the Lord, and to glorify His name, that He had esteemed me worthy, and had manifested unto me my former sins. And when I arose from prayer, behold I saw over against me the old woman whom I had seen the last year, walking and reading in a certain book. And she said unto me, "Canst thou tell these things to the elect of God?" I answered, and said unto her, "Lady, I cannot retain so many things in my memory; but give me the book, and I will write them down." "Take it," says she, "and see that thou restore it again to me." As soon as I had received it, I went aside into a certain place of the field,

and transcribed every letter, for I found no syllables. And as soon as I had finished what was written in the book, the book was suddenly caught out of my hands, but by whom I saw not.

II. After fifteen days, when I had fasted, and entreated the Lord with all earnestness, the knowledge of the writing was revealed unto me. Now the writing was this: Thy seed, O Hermas! have sinned against the Lord, and have betrayed their parents, through their great wickedness; and they have been called the betrayers of their parents, and have gone on in their treachery. And now have they added lewdness to their other sins, and the pollutions of naughtiness; thus have they filled up the measure of their iniquities. But do thou upbraid thy sons with all these words; and thy wife, which shall be thy sister; and let her learn to refrain her tongue, with which she calumniates; for when she shall hear these things, she will refrain herself, and shall obtain mercy. And they also shall be instructed, when thou shalt have reproached them with these words, which the Lord has commanded to be revealed unto thee. Then shall their sins be forgiven which they have heretofore committed, and the sins of all the saints who have sinned even unto this day, if they shall repent with all their hearts, and remove all doubts out of their hearts. For the Lord hath sworn by His glory concerning His elect; having determined this very time, that if any one shall even now sin, he shall not be saved. For the repentance of the righteous has its end; the days of repentance are fulfilled to all the saints, but to the heathen there is repentance even unto the last day. Thou shalt, therefore, say to those who are over the Church, that they order their ways in righteousness, that they may fully receive the promise with much glory. Stand fast, therefore, ye that work righteousness; and continue to do it, that your departure may be with the holy angels. Happy are ye, as many as shall endure the great trial that is at hand, and whosoever shall not deny his life. For the Lord hath sworn by His Son, that whoso denieth His Son, and Him, being afraid of his life, He will also deny him in the world that is to come. But those who shall never deny Him, He will, of His exceeding great mercy, be favourable unto them.

III. But thou, O Hermas! remember not the evils which thy sons have done, neither neglect thy sister, but take care

that they amend of their former sins. For they will be instructed by this doctrine, if thou shalt not be mindful of what they have done wickedly. For the remembrance of evils worketh death; but the forgetting of them life eternal. But thou, O Hermas! hast undergone a great many worldly troubles for the offences of thy house; because thou hast neglected them, as things that did not belong unto thee, and thou art wholly taken up with thy great business. Nevertheless, for this cause shalt thou be saved, that thou hast not departed from the living God: and thy simplicity and singular continency shall preserve thee, if thou shalt continue in them. Yea, they shall save all such as do such things, and walk in innocence and simplicity. They who are of this kind shall prevail against all impiety, and continue unto life eternal Happy are all they that do righteousness; they shall not be consumed for ever. But thou wilt say, Behold, there is a great trial coming. If it seems good to thee, deny him again. The Lord is nigh to them that turn to Him; as it is written in the books of Heldam and Modal, who prophesied to the people of Israel in the wilderness.

IV. Moreover, brethren, it was revealed to me, as I was sleeping, by a very goodly young man, saying unto me, "What thinkest thou of that old woman from whom thou receivedst the book? Who is she?" I answered, "A sybil." "Thou art mistaken," said he, "she is not." I replied, "Who is she then, Sir?" He answered me, "It is the Church of God." And I said unto him, "Why then does she appear old?" "She is therefore," said he, "an old woman, because she was the first of all the creation, and the world was made for her." After this I saw a vision at home in my own house; and the old woman whom I had seen before, came to me, and asked me, "Whether I had yet delivered her book to the elders of the Church?" And I answered "that I had not yet." "Thou hast well done; for I have certain words more to tell thee. But when I shall have finished all the words, they shall be clearly understood by the elect. And thou shalt write two books; and send one to Clement and one to Grapté. For Clement shall send it to the foreign cities, because it is permitted him so to do; but Grapté shall admonish the widows and orphans. But thou shalt read in this city with the elders of the Church."

Vision III.

Of the building of the Church triumphant; and of the several sorts of reprobates.

I. The vision which I saw, brethren, was this. When I had often fasted, and prayed unto the Lord that He would manifest unto me the revelation which He had promised by the old woman to show unto me, the same night she appeared unto me, and said unto me, "Because thou dost thus afflict thyself, and art so desirous to know all things, come into the field, where thou wilt; and about the sixth hour I will appear unto thee, and show thee what thou must see." I asked her, saying, "Lady, into what part of the field?" She answered, "Wherever thou wilt; only choose a good and a private place." And before I began to speak, and to tell her the place, she said unto me, "I will come where thou wilt." I was therefore, brethren, in the field, and I observed the hours, and came into the place where I had appointed her to come. And I beheld a bench placed; it was a linen pillow, and over it spread a covering of fine linen. When I saw these things ordered in this manner, and that there was nobody in the place, I began to be astonished, and my hair stood on end, and a kind of horror seized me, for I was alone. But being come to myself, and calling to mind the glory of God, and taking courage, I fell down upon my knees, and began again to confess my sins as before. And whilst I was doing this, the old woman came thither with the six young men whom I had seen before, and stood behind me, as I was praying, and heard me praying and confessing my sins unto the Lord. And touching me, she said, "Leave off now to pray only for thy sins; pray also for righteousness, that thou mayest receive a part of her into thy house." And she lifted me up from the place, and took me by the hand, and brought me to the seat, and said to the young men, "Go, and build." As soon as they were departed, and we were alone, she said unto me, "Sit here." I answered her, "Lady, let those who are elder sit first." She replied, "Sit down as I bid you." And when I would have sat on the right side, she suffered me not, but made a sign to me with her hand that I should sit on the left. As I was therefore musing and full of sorrow, that she would

not suffer me to sit on the right side, she said unto me, "Hermas, why art thou sad? The place which is on the right hand, is theirs who have already attained unto God, and have suffered for His name's sake. But there is yet a great deal remaining unto thee, before thou canst sit with them. But continue, as thou dost, in thy sincerity, and thou shalt sit with them; as all others shall, that do their works, and shall bear what they have borne."

II. I said unto her, "Lady, I would know what it is that they have suffered?" "Hear then," said she, "Wild beasts, scourgings, imprisonments, and crosses, for His name's sake. For this cause, the right hand of holiness belongs to them, and to all others, as many as shall suffer for the name of God; but the left belongs to the rest. Howbeit, the gifts and the promises belong to both, to them on the right, and to those on the left hand; only that sitting on the right hand, they have some glory above the others. But thou art desirous to sit on the right hand with them; and yet thy defects are many. But thou shalt be purged from thy defect; as also all who doubt not shall be cleansed from all the sins which they have committed unto this day." And when she had said this, she would have departed; wherefore falling down before her feet, I began to entreat her, for the Lord's sake, that she would show the vision which she had promised. Then she again took me by the hand, and lifted me up, and made me sit upon the seat on the left side; and holding up a certain bright wand, said unto me, "Seest thou that great thing?" I replied, "Lady, I see nothing." She answered, "Dost thou not see over against thee a great tower, which is built upon the water, with bright square stones? For the tower was built upon a square by those six young men who came with her. But many thousands of other men brought stone: some drew them out of the deep: others carried them from the ground, and gave them to the six young men: and they took them, and built. As for those stones which were drawn out of the deep, they put them all into the building; for they were polished, and their squares exactly answered one another; and so one was joined in such wise to the other, that there was no space to be seen where they joined; insomuch that the whole tower appeared to be built as it were of one stone. But as for the other stones that were taken off from the

ground, some of them they rejected, others they fitted into the building. As for those which were rejected, some they cut out, and cast them at a distance from the tower; but many others of them lay round about the tower, which they made no use of in the building; for some of these were rough, others had clefts in them, others were white and round, and not proper for the building of the tower. But I saw the other stones cast afar off from the tower, and falling into the high-way, and yet not continuing in the way, but were rolled from the way into a desert place. Others I saw falling into the fire, and burning; others fell near the water, yet could not roll themselves into it, though very desirous to fall into the water.

III. And when she had showed me these things, she would have departed. But I said unto her, "Lady, what does it profit me to see these things, and not understand what they mean?" She answered and said unto me, "You are very cunning, in that you are desirous to know those things which relate to the tower." "Yea," said I, "lady, that I may declare them unto the brethren; and they may rejoice, and hearing these things, may glorify God with great glory." Then she said, "Many indeed shall hear them; and when they shall have heard them, some shall rejoice, and others weep. And yet even these, if they shall repent, shall rejoice too. Hear, therefore, what I shall say concerning the parable of the tower; and after this, be no longer importunate with me about the revelation. For these revelations have an end, seeing they are fulfilled; but thou dost not leave off to desire revelations, for thou art very urgent. As for the tower which thou seest built, it is I myself, namely, the Church, which has appeared to thee both now and heretofore; wherefore ask what thou wilt concerning the tower, and I will reveal it unto thee, that thou mayest rejoice with the saints. I said unto her, "Lady, because thou hast thought me once worthy to receive from thee the revelation of all these things, declare them unto me." She answered me, "Whatsoever is fit to be revealed unto thee, shall be revealed; only let thy heart be with the Lord, and doubt not, whatsoever thou shalt see." I asked her, "Lady, why is the tower built upon the water?" She replied, "I said before to thee that thou wert very wise, to inquire diligently concerning the building, therefore thou shalt

find the truth. Hear, therefore, why the tower is built upon the water:—because your life is and shall be saved by water: for it is founded by the word of the Almighty and Honourable Name, and is supported by the invisible power and virtue of God."

IV. And I answering said unto her, "These things are very admirable; but, lady, who are those six young men that build?" "They are," said she, "the angels of God, which were first appointed, and to whom the Lord has delivered all His creatures to frame and build them up, and to rule over them; for by these the building of the tower shall be finished." "And who are the rest, who bring them stones?" "They also are the holy angels of the Lord; but the other are more excellent than these. Wherefore, when the whole building of the tower shall be finished, they shall all feast together beside the tower, and shall glorify God, because the structure of the tower is finished." I asked her, saying, "I would know the condition of the stones, and the meaning of them, what it is?" She answering said unto me, "Art thou better than all others, that this should be revealed unto thee? for others are both before thee, and better than thou art, to whom these visions should be made manifest; nevertheless, that the name of God may be glorified, it has been, and shall be revealed unto thee, for the sake of those who are doubtful, and think in their hearts whether these things are so or not. Tell them that all these things are true; and that there is nothing in them that is not true; but all are firm, and truly established.

V. "Hear now then concerning the stones that are in the building. The square and white stones, which agree exactly in their joints, are the apostles, and bishops, and doctors, and ministers, who through the mercy of God have come in, and governed, and taught, and ministered holily and modestly to the elect of God, both that are fallen asleep and which yet remain; and have always agreed with them, and have had peace within themselves, and have heard each other. For which cause their joints exactly meet together in the building of the tower. They which are drawn out of the deep and put into the building, and whose joints agree with the other stones which are already built, are those which are already fallen asleep, and have suffered for the sake of the Lord's name." "And what are the other stones, lady, that are brought from the

earth? I would know what they are." She answered, "They which lie upon the ground, and are not polished, are those which God has approved, because they have walked in the law of the Lord, and directed their ways in His commandments. They which are brought and put in the building of the tower, are the young in faith, and the faithful: and these are admonished by the angels to do well, because that iniquity is not found in them." "But who are those whom they rejected, and laid beside the tower?" "They are such as have sinned, and are willing to repent; for which cause they are not cast far from the tower, because they will be useful for the building if they shall repent. They, therefore, that are yet to repent, if they shall repent, shall become strong in the faith; that is, if they repent now, whilst the tower is building. For if the building shall be finished, there will then be no place for them to be put in, but they shall be rejected: for he, only, has this privilege who shall now be put into the tower.

VI. "But would you know who they are that were cut out, and cast afar off from the tower?" "Lady," said I, "I desire it." "They are the children of iniquity, who believed only in hypocrisy, but departed not from their evil ways; for this cause they shall not be saved, because they are not of any use in the building, by reason of their sins: wherefore they are cut out, and cast afar off, because of the anger of the Lord, and because they have provoked Him to anger against them. As for the great number of other stones which thou hast seen placed about the tower, but not put into the building; those which are rugged are they who have known the truth, but have not continued in it, nor been joined to the saints, and therefore are unprofitable. Those that have clefts in them, are they who keep up discord in their hearts against each other, and live not in peace: that are friendly when present with their brethren, but, as soon as they are departed from one another, their wickedness still continues in their hearts: these are the clefts which are seen in those stones. Those that are maimed and short, are they who have believed, indeed, but still are in great measure full of wickedness; for this cause are they maimed, and not whole." "But what are the white and round stones, lady, and which are not proper for the building of the tower?" She answering, said unto me, "How long wilt thou continue foolish, and without understanding: asking every thing and

discerning nothing? They are such as have faith, indeed, but have withal the riches of this present world. When therefore any troubles arise, for the sake of their riches and traffic they deny the Lord," I answering said unto her, "When therefore will they be profitable to the Lord?" "When their riches shall be cut away," says she, "in which they take delight, then they will be profitable unto the Lord for His building: for, as a round stone, unless it be cut away, and cast somewhat off of its bulk, cannot be made square; so they who are rich in this world, unless their riches be pared off, cannot be made profitable unto the Lord. Learn this from thy own experience: when thou wert rich, thou wast unprofitable, but now thou art profitable, and fit for the life which thou hast undertaken; for thou also once wast one of those stones.

VII. "As for the rest of the stones which thou sawest cast afar off from the tower, and running in the way, and tumbled out of the way into desert places, they are such as have believed, indeed, but through their doubting have forsaken the true way, thinking that they could find a better. But they wander, and are miserable, going into desolate ways. Then for those stones which fell into the fire, and were burnt; they are those who have for ever departed from the living God; nor doth it ever come into their hearts to repent, by reason of the affection which they bear to their lusts and wickednesses which they commit." "And what are the rest, which fell by the water, and could not roll into the water?" "They are such as have heard the word, and were willing to be baptized in the name of the Lord, but, considering the great holiness which the truth requires, have withdrawn themselves, and walked again after their wicked lusts." Thus she finished the explication of the tower. But I being still urgent, asked her, "Is there repentance allowed to all those stones which are thus cast away, and were not suitable to the building of the tower; and shall they find place in this tower?" "They may repent," said she, "but they cannot come into this tower; but they shall be placed in a much lower rank, and this after that they shall have been afflicted, and fulfilled the days of their sins. And for this cause they shall be removed, because they have received the word of righteousness: and then they shall be translated from their afflictions, if they shall have a true sense in their hearts of what they have done amiss. But

if they shall not have this sense in their hearts, they shall not be saved, by reason of the hardness of their hearts."

VIII. When, therefore, I had done asking her concerning all these things, she said unto me, "Wilt thou see somewhat else?" And being desirous of seeing it, I became very cheerful of countenance. She, therefore, looking back upon me, and smiling a little, said unto me, "Seest thou seven women about the tower?" "Lady," said I, "I see them." "This tower," replied she, "is supported by them, according to the command of the Lord: hear, therefore, the effects of them. The first of them, which holds fast with her hand, is called Faith: by her the elect shall be saved. The next, which is girt up, and looks manly, is named Abstinence: she is the daughter of Faith. Whosoever, therefore, shall follow her, shall be happy in all his life; because he shall abstain from all evil works, believing, that if he shall contain himself from all concupiscence, he shall be the heir of eternal life." "And what, lady," said I, "are the other five?" "They are," replied she, "the daughters of one another. The first of them is called Simplicity; the next Innocence; the third Modesty; then Discipline; and the last of all is Charity. When, therefore, thou shalt have fulfilled the works of their mother, thou shalt be able to do all things." "Lady," said I, "I would know what particular virtue every one of these has." "Hear then," replied she, "they have equal virtues, and their virtues are knit together, and follow one another as they were born. From Faith proceeds Abstinence; from Abstinence, Simplicity; from Simplicity, Innocence; from Innocence, Modesty; from Modesty, Discipline and Charity. Therefore the works of these are holy, and chaste, and right. Whosoever, therefore, shall serve these, and hold fast to their works, he shall have his dwelling in the tower with the saints of God." Then I asked her concerning the times, whether the end were now at hand? But she cried out with a loud voice, saying, "O foolish man! Dost thou not see the tower yet a building? When, therefore, the tower shall be finished and built, it shall have an end; and indeed it shall soon be accomplished. But do not ask me any more questions: what has been said may suffice thee and all the saints, for the refreshment of your spirits. For these things have not been revealed to thee only, but that thou mayest make them manifest unto all. For there-

fore, O Hermas, after three days thou mayest understand these words which I begin to speak unto thee, that thou mayest speak them in the ears of the saints; that when they shall have heard and done them, they may be cleansed from their iniquities, and thou together with them.

IX. "Hear me, therefore, O my sons! I have bred you up in much simplicity, and innocency, and modesty, for the mercy of God, which has dropped down upon you in righteousness; that you should be sanctified, and justified from all sin and wickedness: but ye will not cease from your evil doings. Now, therefore, hearken unto me, and have peace one with another, and visit one another, and receive one another, and do not enjoy the creatures of God alone. Give freely to them that are in need. For some by too free feeding contract an infirmity in their flesh, and do injury to their bodies; whilst the flesh of others, who have not food, withers away, because they want sufficient nourishment, and their bodies are consumed. Wherefore this intemperance is hurtful to you, who have, and do not communicate to them that want. Prepare for the judgment that is about to come upon you. Ye that are the more eminent, search out them that are hungry, whilst the tower is yet unfinished. For when the tower shall be finished, ye shall be willing to do good, and shall not find any place in it. Beware therefore, ye that glory in your riches, lest perhaps they groan who are in want, and their sighing come up unto God, and ye be shut out with your goods without the gate of the tower. Behold I now warn you who are set over the Church, and love the highest seats: be not ye like unto those that work mischief. And they indeed carry about their poison in boxes; but ye contain your poison and infection in your hearts; and will not purge them, and mix your sense with a pure heart, that ye may find mercy with the Great King. Take heed, my children, that your dissensions deprive you not of your lives. How will ye instruct the elect of God, when ye yourselves want correction? Wherefore admonish one another, and be at peace among yourselves, that I, standing before your father, may give an account for you unto the Lord."

X. And when she made an end of talking with me, the six young men that built, came and carried her to the tower; and four others took up the seat on which she sat, and they also

went away again to the tower. I saw not the faces of these, for their backs were towards me. As she was going away, I asked her, "that she would reveal to me what concerned the three forms, in which she had appeared unto me." But she answering, said unto me, "Concerning these things thou must ask some other, that they may be revealed unto thee." Now, brethren, in the first vision the last year, she appeared unto me exceedingly old, and sitting in a chair. In another vision, she had indeed a youthful face, but her flesh and hair were old; and she talked with me standing, and was more cheerful than the first time. In the third vision, she was in all respects much younger, and comely to the eye; only she had the hair of an aged person; yet she looked cheerful, and sat upon a seat. I was therefore very sad concerning these things, until I might understand the vision. Wherefore I saw the same old woman, in a vision of the night, saying unto me, "All prayer needeth humiliation. Fast therefore, and thou shalt learn from the Lord that which thou dost ask." I fasted therefore one day. The same night a young man appeared to me and said, "Why dost thou thus often desire revelations in thy prayers? Take heed that, by asking many things, thou hurt not thy body. Let these revelations suffice thee. Canst thou see more notable revelations than those which thou hast already received?" I answered and said unto him, "Sir, I only ask this one thing upon the account of the three figures of the old woman that appeared to me, that the revelation may be complete." He answered me, "You are not without understanding, but your doubts make you so; forasmuch as you have not your heart with the Lord." I replied and said, "But we shall learn these things more carefully from you."

XI. "Hear then," says he, "concerning the figures about which you inquire. And first, in the first vision she appeared to thee in the shape of an old woman sitting in a chair; because your old spirit was decayed, and without strength, by reason of your infirmities, and the doubtfulness of your heart. For as they who are old have no hope of renewing themselves, nor expect any thing but their departure; so you, being weakened through your worldly affairs, gave yourself up to sloth, and cast not away your solicitude from yourself upon the Lord; and your sense was confused, and you grew old in your sadness." "But, Sir, I would know why she sat upon a

chair?" He answered, "Because every one that is weak sitteth upon a chair, by reason of his infirmity, that his weakness may be upheld: behold, therefore, the figure of the first vision.

XII. "In the second vision you saw her standing, and having a youthful face, and more cheerful than her former; but her flesh and her hair were ancient. Hear," said he, "this parable also. When any one grows old, he despairs of himself by reason of his infirmity and poverty, and expects nothing but the last day of his life. But on a sudden an inheritance is left to him, and he hears of it, and arises; and being become cheerful, he puts on new strength. And now he no longer sits down, but stands; and is delivered from his former sorrow; and sits not, but acts manfully. So you, having heard the revelation which God revealed unto you—because God had compassion upon you, and renewed your spirit—both laid aside your infirmities and strength came to you, and you grew strong in the faith; and God, seeing your strength, rejoiced. For this cause he showed you the building of the tower; and will show other things unto you, if ye shall have peace with all your heart among each other.

XIII. "But in the third vision you saw her yet younger; fair and cheerful, and of a serene countenance. For as, if some good news comes to one that is sad, he straightway forgets his sadness, and regards nothing else but the good news he has heard, and for the rest he is comforted, and his spirit is renewed through the joy which he has received, even so you have been refreshed in your spirit, by seeing these good things. And for that you saw her sitting upon a bench, it denotes a strong position; because a bench has four feet, and stands strongly. And even the world itself is upheld by the four elements. They therefore that repent perfectly, shall be young; and they that turn from their sins with their whole heart, shall be established. And now you have the revelation fully; ask no more to have any thing farther revealed unto you. But if any thing be to be revealed, it shall be made manifest unto you."

Vision IV.

Of the trial and tribulation that is about to come upon men.

I. I saw a vision, brethren, twenty days after the former vision; a representation of the tribulation that is at hand. I was walking in the field way: (now from the public way to the manor whither I went is about ten furlongs: it is a way very little frequented:) and as I was walking alone, I entreated the Lord that He would confirm the revelation which He had showed unto me by His holy church; and would grant repentance to all His servants who had offended, that His great and honourable name might be glorified: and because He thought me worthy to whom He might show His wonders; and that I might honour Him, and give thanks unto Him. And, behold, something like a voice answered me, "Doubt not, Hermas." Wherefore, I began to think, and say within myself, "Why should I doubt, seeing I am thus settled by the Lord, and have seen such glorious things?" I had gone but a little farther, brethren, when, behold, I saw a dust rise up to heaven. I began to say within myself, "Is there a drove of cattle coming, that raises such a dust?" It was about a furlong off from me; and, behold, I saw the dust rise more and more, insomuch that I began to suspect that there was somewhat extraordinary in it. And the sun shone a little; and, behold, I saw a great beast, as it were a whale; and fiery locusts came out of his mouth. The height of the beast was about a hundred feet; and he had a head like a large earthen vessel. I began to weep, and to pray unto the Lord that He would deliver me from it. Then I called to mind the word which I had heard, "Doubt not, Hermas." Wherefore, brethren, putting on a divine faith, and remembering who it was that had taught me great things, I delivered myself boldly unto the beast. Now the beast came on in such a manner as if it could at once have devoured a city. I came near unto it; and the beast extended its whole bulk upon the ground; and put forth nothing but its tongue, nor once moved itself, till I had quite passed by it. Now the beast had upon its head four colours, first black, then a red and bloody colour, then a golden, and then a white.

II. After that I had passed by it, and was gone forward

about thirty feet, behold, there met me a certain virgin, well adorned, as if she had been just come out of her bride-chamber; all in white, having on white shoes, and a veil down her face, and covered with shining hair. Now I knew by my former visions that it was the church, and thereupon grew the more cheerful. She saluted me, saying, "Hail, O man!" I returned the salutation, saying, "Lady, hail!" She, answering, said unto me, "Did nothing meet you, O man?" I replied, "Lady, there met me such a beast as seemed able to devour a whole people: but by the power of God, and through His singular mercy, I escaped it." "Thou didst escape it well," said she, "because thou didst cast thy whole care upon God, and openedst thy heart unto Him, believing that thou couldst be safe by no other than by His great and honourable name. For this cause the Lord sent His angel who is over the beasts, whose name is HEGRIN, and stopped his mouth, that he should not devour thee. Thou hast escaped a great trial through thy faith, and because thou didst not doubt for such a terrible beast. Go, therefore, and relate to the elect of God the great things that He hath done for thee. And thou shalt say unto them, that this beast is the figure of the trial that is about to come. If, therefore, ye shall have prepared yourselves, ye may escape it, if your heart be pure and without spot; and if ye shall serve God all the rest of your days without complaint. Cast all your cares upon the Lord, and He will direct them. Believe in God, ye doubtful, because He can do all things; He can both turn away His wrath from you, and send you help and security. Woe to the doubtful, to those who shall hear these words, and shall despise them: it had been better for them that they had not been born."

III. Then I asked her concerning the four colours which the beast had upon its head. But she answered me, saying, "Again thou art curious in that thou askest concerning these things." And I said unto her, "Lady, show me what they are." "Hear," said she, "the black which thou sawest denotes the world in which you dwell. The fiery and bloody colour signifies that this age must be destroyed by fire and blood. The golden part are ye who have escaped out of it; for as gold is tried by the fire, and is made profitable, so are ye also in like manner tried who dwell among the men of this

world. They, therefore, that shall endure to the end, and be proved by them, shall be purged. And as gold, by this trial, is cleansed and loses its dross; so shall ye also cast away all sorrow and trouble, and be made pure for the building of the tower. But the white colour denotes the time of the world which is to come, in which the elect of God shall dwell: because the elect of God shall be pure and without spot unto life eternal. Wherefore do not thou cease to speak these things in the ears of the saints. Here ye have the figure of the great tribulation that is about to come; which, if you please, shall be nothing to you. Keep therefore in mind the things which I have said unto you." When she had spoken thus much she departed; but I saw not whither she went. But suddenly I heard a noise, and I turned back, being afraid; for I thought that the beast was coming towards me.

THE
SECOND BOOK OF HERMAS,
WHICH IS CALLED HIS COMMANDS.

The Introduction.

WHEN I had prayed at home, and was sat down upon the bed, a certain man came in to me, with a reverend look, in the habit of a shepherd, clothed with a white cloak, having his bag upon his back, and his staff in his hand, and saluted me. I returned his salutation; and immediately he sat down by me, and said unto me: "I am sent by that venerable messenger, that I should dwell with thee all the remaining days of thy life." But I thought he was come to try me, and said unto him, "Who are you? for I know to whom I am committed." He said unto me, "Do you not know me?" I answered, "No." "I am," said he, "that shepherd to whose care you are delivered." Whilst he was yet speaking, his shape was changed; and when I knew that it was he to whom I was committed, I was ashamed, and a sudden fear came upon me, and I was utterly overcome with sadness, because I had spoken so foolishly unto him. But he said unto me, "Be not ashamed, but receive strength in thy mind, through the commands which I am about to deliver unto thee. For," said he, "I am sent to show unto thee all those things again which thou hast seen before; but specially such of them as may be of most use unto thee. And first of all, write my commands and similitudes; the rest thou shalt so write as I shall show unto thee. But I therefore bid thee, first of all, write my commands and similitudes, that by often

reading of them thou mayest the more easily keep them in memory." Whereupon I wrote his commands and similitudes, as he bade me; which things, if when ye have heard, ye shall observe to do them, and shall walk according to them, and exercise yourselves in them, with a pure mind, ye shall receive from the Lord those things which He has promised unto you. But if, having heard them, ye shall not repent, but shall still go on to add to your sins, ye shall be punished by Him. All these things that shepherd, the angel of repentance, commanded me to write.

The First Command.

Of believing in one God.

"First of all, believe that there is one God, who created and framed all things of nothing into a being. He comprehends all things, and is only immense, *not to be comprehended by any;* who can neither be defined by any words, nor conceived by the mind. Therefore believe in Him, and fear Him: and fearing Him abstain from all evil. Keep these things, and cast all lust and iniquity far from thee; and put on righteousness; and thou shalt live to God, if thou shalt keep this commandment."

The Second Command.

That we must avoid detraction, and do our alms-deeds with simplicity.

He said unto me, "Be innocent and without disguise; so shalt thou be like an infant who knows no malice, which destroys the life of man. Especially see that thou speak evil of none; nor willingly hear any one speak evil of any. For if thou observest not this, thou also who hearest shalt be partaker of the sin of him that speaketh evil, by believing the slander; and thou also shalt have sin, because thou believedst him that spake evil of thy brother. Detraction is a pernicious thing; an inconstant evil spirit; that never continues in peace, but is always in discord. Wherefore refrain thyself from it; and keep peace evermore with thy brother. Put on a holy

constancy, in which there are no sins, but all is full of joy; and do good of thy labours. Give without distinction to all that are in want; not doubting to whom thou givest. But give to all; for God will have us give to all of all His own gifts. They, therefore, that receive shall give an account to God, both wherefore they received, and for what end. And they that receive without a real need, shall give an account for it: but he that gives shall be innocent; for he has fulfilled his duty as he received it from God; not making any choice to whom he should give, and to whom not. And this service he did with simplicity, and to the glory of God. Keep, therefore, this command according as I have delivered it unto thee, that thy repentance may be found to be sincere, and that good may come to thy house; and have a pure heart."

The Third Command.

Of avoiding lying: and the repentance of Hermas *for his dissimulation.*

Moreover he said unto me, "Love truth, and let all the speech be true which proceeds out of thy mouth, that the spirit which the Lord hath given to dwell in thy flesh may be found true towards all men, and the Lord be glorified, who hath given such a spirit unto thee; because God is true in all His words, and in Him there is no lie. They, therefore, that lie, deny the Lord; and become robbers of the Lord, not rendering to God what they received from Him. For they received the spirit free from lying: if, therefore, they make that a liar, they defile what was committed to them by the Lord, and become deceivers." When I heard this I wept bitterly. And when he saw me weeping, he said unto me, "Why weepest thou?" And I said, "Because, Sir, I doubt whether I can be saved." He asked me, "Wherefore?" I replied, "Because, Sir, I never spake a true word in my life, but always lived in dissimulation, and affirmed a lie for truth to all men; and no man contradicted me, but all gave credit to my words. How then can I live, seeing I have done in this manner?" And he said unto me, "Thou thinkest well and truly. For thou oughtest, as the servant of God, to have walked in the truth, and not have joined an evil conscience

with the spirit of truth, nor have grieved the holy and true Spirit of God." And I replied unto him, "Sir, I never before hearkened so diligently to these things." He answered, "Now thou hearest them, take care, from henceforth, that even those things which thou hast formerly spoken falsely for the sake of thy business, may, by thy present truth, receive credit. For even those things may be credited, if for the time to come thou shalt speak the truth; and by so doing thou mayest attain unto life. And whosoever shall hearken unto this command, and do it, and shall depart from all lying, he shall live unto God."

The Fourth Command.

Of putting away one's wife for adultery.

I. "Furthermore," said he, "I command thee, that thou keep thyself chaste, and that thou suffer not any thought of any other marriage, or of fornication, to enter into thy heart; for such a thought produces a great sin. But be thou at all times mindful of the Lord, and thou shalt never sin. For if such an evil thought should arise in thy heart, thou shouldest be guilty of a great sin; and they who do such things follow the way of death. Look, therefore, to thyself, and keep thyself from such a thought: for where chastity remains in the heart of a righteous man, there an evil thought ought never to arise." And I said unto him, "Sir, suffer me to speak a little to you." He bade me say on, and I answered, "Sir, if a man shall have a wife that is faithful in the Lord, and shall catch her in adultery, doth a man sin that continues to live still with her?" And he said unto me, "As long as he is ignorant of her sin, he commits no fault in living with her; but if a man shall know his wife to have offended, and she shall not repent of her sin, but go on still in her fornication, and a man shall continue nevertheless to live with her, he shall become guilty of her sin, and partake with her in her adultery." And I said unto him, "What, therefore, is to be done, if the woman continues on in her sin?" He answered, "Let her husband put her away, and let him continue by himself. But if he shall put away his wife, and marry another, he also doth commit adultery." And I said, "What if the woman that is so put away shall repent, and be willing to return to her

husband; shall she not be received by him?" He said unto me, "Yes; and if her husband shall not receive her, he will sin, and commit a great offence against himself: but he ought to receive the offender, if she repents; only not often; for to the servants of God there is but one repentance. And for this cause a man that putteth away his wife ought not to take another, because she may repent. This act is alike both in the man and in the woman. Now they commit adultery, not only who pollute their flesh, but who also make an image. If, therefore, a woman perseveres in any thing of this kind, and repents not, depart from her, and live not with her: otherwise thou also shalt be partaker of her sin. But it is, therefore, commanded, that both the man and the woman should remain unmarried, because such persons may repent. Nor do I in this administer any occasion for the doing of these things; but rather that whoso has offended, should not offend any more. But for their former sins, God, who has the power of healing, will give a remedy: for he has the power of all things."

II. I asked him again, and said, "Seeing the Lord hath thought me worthy that thou shouldst dwell with me continually, speak a few words unto me, because I understand nothing, and my heart is hardened through my former conversation; and open my understanding, because I am very dull, and apprehend nothing at all." And he answering, said unto me, "I am the minister of repentance, and give understanding to all that repent. Does it not seem to thee to be a very wise thing to repent? Because he that does so gets great understanding; for he is sensible that he hath sinned and done wickedly in the sight of the Lord; and he remembers within himself, that he has offended, and repents and does no more wickedly, but does that which is good, and humbles his soul, and afflicts it, because he has offended. You see, therefore, that repentance is great wisdom." And I said unto him, "For this cause, Sir, I inquire diligently into all things, because I am a sinner, that I may know what I must do that I may live; because my sins are many." And he said unto me, "Thou shalt live if thou shalt keep these my commandments. And whosoever shall hear and do these commands, shall live unto God."

III. And I said unto him, "I have even now heard from certain teachers that there is no other repentance besides that

of baptism ; when we go down into the water, and receive the forgiveness of our sins ; and that after that, we must sin no more, but live in purity." And he said unto me, "Thou hast been rightly informed. Nevertheless, seeing now thou inquirest diligently into all things, I will manifest this also unto thee ; yet not so as to give any occasion of sinning, either to those who shall hereafter believe, or to those who have already believed in the Lord. For neither they who have newly believed, or who shall hereafter believe, have any repentance of sins, but forgiveness of them. But as to those who have been called to the faith, and since that are fallen into any gross sin, the Lord hath appointed repentance : because God knoweth the thoughts of all men's hearts, and their infirmities, and the manifold wickedness of the devil, who is always contriving something against the servants of God, and maliciously lays snares for them. Therefore, our merciful Lord had compassion towards His creature, and appointed that repentance, and gave unto me the power of it. And, therefore, I say unto thee, if any one, after that great and holy calling, shall be tempted by the devil and sin, he has one repentance. But if he shall often sin and repent, it shall not profit such a one ; for he shall hardly live unto God." And I said, "Sir, I am restored again to life, since I have thus diligently hearkened to these commands. For I perceive, that if I shall not hereafter add any more to my sins, I shall be saved." And he said, "Thou shalt be saved ; and so shall all others, as many as shall observe these commandments."

IV. And again I said unto him, "Sir, seeing thou hearest me patiently, show me yet one thing more." "Tell me," saith he, "what it is." And I said, "If a husband or wife die, and the party which survives marry again, does he sin in so doing ?" "He that marries," says he, "sins not ; howbeit, if he shall remain single, he shall thereby gain to himself great honour before the Lord. Keep, therefore, thy chastity and modesty, and thou shalt live unto God. Observe from henceforth those things which I speak with thee, and command thee to observe ; from the time that I have been delivered unto thee, and dwell in thy house. So shall thy former sins be forgiven, if thou shalt keep these my commandments. And in like manner shall all others be forgiven, who shall observe these my commandments."

The Fifth Command.

Of the sadness of the heart; and of patience.

I. "Be patient," says he, "and long suffering; so shalt thou have dominion over all wicked works, and shalt fulfil all righteousness. For if thou shalt be patient, the holy spirit which dwelleth in thee shall be pure, and not be darkened by any evil spirit; but being full of joy shall be enlarged, and feast in the body in which it dwells, and serve the Lord with joy and in great peace. But if any anger shall overtake thee, presently the holy spirit which is in thee will be straitened, and seek to depart from thee. For he is choked by the evil spirit, and has not the liberty of serving the Lord as he would; for he is grieved by anger. When, therefore, both these spirits dwell together, it is destructive to a man. As if one should take a little wormwood, and put it into a vessel of honey, the whole honey would be spoiled; and a great quantity of honey is corrupted by a very little wormwood, and loses the sweetness of honey, and is no longer acceptable to its lord, because the whole honey is made bitter, and loses its use. But if no wormwood be put into the honey, it is sweet and profitable to its lord. Thus is forbearance sweeter than honey, and profitable to the Lord who dwelleth in it. But anger is unprofitable. If, therefore, anger shall be mixed with forbearance, the soul is distressed, and its prayer is not profitable with God." And I said unto him, "Sir, I would know the sinfulness of anger, that I may keep myself from it." And he said unto me, "Thou shalt know it; and if thou shalt not keep thyself from it, thou shalt lose thy hope with all thy house. Wherefore depart from it. For I the messenger of righteousness am with thee; and all that depart from it, as many as shall repent with all their hearts, shall live unto God; and I will be with them and will keep them all. For all such as have repented, have been justified by the Most Holy Messenger, who is a minister of salvation."

II. "And now," says he, "hear the wickedness of anger: how evil and hurtful it is, and how it overthrows the servants of God; for it cannot hurt those that are full of faith, because the power of God is with them; but it overthrows the doubtful, and those that are destitute of faith. For as often as it

sees such men it casts itself into their hearts; and so a man or woman is in bitterness for nothing—for the things of life; or for sustenance; or for a vain word, if any should chance to fall in; or by reason of any friend; or for a debt; or for any other superfluous things of the like nature. For these things are foolish and superfluous, and vain to the servants of God. But equanimity is strong, and forcible, and of great power, and sitteth in great enlargement; is cheerful, rejoicing in peace; and glorifying God at all times with meekness. And this long suffering dwells with those that are full of faith. But anger is foolish, and light, and empty. Now bitterness is bred through folly; by bitterness, anger; by anger, fury. And this fury arising from so many evil principles, worketh a great and uncurable sin. For when all these things are in the same man in which the Holy Spirit dwells, the vessel cannot contain them, but runs over; and because the Spirit, being tender, cannot tarry with the evil one, it departs, and dwells with him that is meek. When, therefore, it is departed from the man in whom it dwelt, that man becomes destitute of the Holy Spirit, and is afterwards filled with wicked spirits, and is blinded with evil thoughts. Thus does it happen to all angry men. Wherefore depart thou from anger, and put on equanimity, and resist wrath; so shalt thou be found with modesty and chastity by God. Take good heed, therefore, that thou neglect not this commandment. For if thou shalt obey this command, then shalt thou also be able to observe the other commandments which I shall command thee. Wherefore strengthen thyself now in these commands, that thou mayest live unto God. And whosoever shall observe these commandments, shall live unto God."

The Sixth Command.

That every man has two angels; and of the suggestions of both.

I. "I commanded thee," said he, "in my first commandment, that thou shouldst keep faith, and fear, and repentance." "Yes, Sir," said I. He continued, "But now I will show thee the virtues of these commands, that thou mayest know their effects; how they are prescribed alike to the just and unjust. Do thou, therefore, believe the righteous, but give

no credit to the unrighteous. For righteousness keepeth the right way, but unrighteousness the wicked way. Do thou, therefore, keep the right way, and leave that which is evil. For the evil way has not a good end, but hath many stumbling-blocks; it is rugged and full of thorns, and leads to destruction, and is hurtful to all such as walk in it. But they who go in the right way walk with evenness, and without offence, because it is not rough nor thorny. Thou seest therefore how it is best to walk in this way. Thou shalt, therefore, go," says he, "and all others as many as believe in God with all their heart, shall go through it."

II. "And now," says he, "understand, first of all, what belongs to faith. There are two angels with man; one of righteousness, the other of iniquity." And I said unto him, "Sir, how shall I know that there are two such angels with man?" "Hear," says he, "and understand. The angel of righteousness is mild, and modest, and gentle, and quiet. When, therefore, he gets into thy heart, immediately he talks with thee of righteousness, of modesty, of chastity, of bountifulness, of forgiveness, of charity, and piety. When all these things come into thy heart, know then that the angel of righteousness is with thee. Wherefore hearken to this angel, and to his works. Learn also the works of the angel of iniquity. He is, first of all, bitter, and angry, and foolish; and his works are pernicious, and overthrow the servants of God. When, therefore, these things come into thy heart, thou shalt know, by his works, that this is the angel of iniquity." And I said unto him, "Sir, how shall I understand these things?" "Hear," says he, "and understand. When anger overtakes thee, or bitterness, know that he is in thee; as also when the desire of many things, and of the best meats, and of drunkenness; when the love of what belongs to others, pride, and much speaking, and ambition, and the like things come upon thee. When, therefore, these things arise in thy heart, know that the angel of iniquity is with thee. Seeing, therefore, thou knowest his works, depart from them all, and give no credit to him; because his works are evil, and become not the servants of God. Here, therefore, thou hast the works of both these angels. Understand now, and believe the angel of righteousness, because his instruction is good. For let a man be never so happy, yet if the thoughts of the

other angel rise in his heart, that man or woman must needs sin. But let a man or woman be never so wicked, if the works of the angel of righteousness come into his heart, that man or woman must needs do some good. Thou seest, therefore, how it is good to follow the angel of righteousness. If therefore thou shalt follow him, and submit to his works, thou shalt live unto God. And as many as shall submit to his works, shall live also unto God."

The Seventh Command.

That we must fear God, but not the devil.

"Fear God," says he, "and keep His commandments. For if thou keepest His commandments thou shalt be powerful in every work, and all thy work shall be excellent. For by fearing God, thou shalt do everything well. This is that fear with which thou must be affected, that thou mayest be saved. But fear not the devil; for if thou fearest the Lord, thou shalt have dominion over him, because there is no power in him. Now if there be no power in him, then neither is he to be feared. But he in whom there is excellent power, he is to be feared; for every one that has power is to be feared. But he that has no power is despised by every one. Fear the works of the devil, because they are evil. For by fearing the Lord, thou wilt fear, and not do the works of the devil, but keep thyself from them. There is, therefore, a two-fold fear. If thou wilt not do evil, fear the Lord, and thou shalt not do it. But if thou wilt do good, the fear of the Lord is strong, and great, and glorious. Wherefore, fear God, and thou shalt live: and whosoever shall fear Him, and keep His commandments, their life is with the Lord. But they who keep them not, neither is life in them."

The Eighth Command.

That we must flee from evil, and do good.

"I have told thee," said he, "that there are two kinds of creatures of the Lord, and that there is a twofold abstinence. From some things, therefore, thou must abstain, and from

others not." I answered, "Declare to me, Sir, from what I must abstain, and from what not." "Hearken!" said he. "Keep thyself from evil, and do it not; but abstain not from good, but do it. For if thou shalt abstain from what is good, and not do it, thou shalt sin. Abstain, therefore, from all evil, and thou shalt know all righteousness." I said, "What evil things are they from which I must abstain?" "Hearken!" said he; "from adultery, from drunkenness, from riots, from excess of eating, from daintiness and dishonesty, from pride, from fraud, from lying, from detraction, from hypocrisy, from remembrance of injuries, and from all evil speaking. For these are the works of iniquity, from which the servant of God must abstain. For he that cannot keep himself from these things, cannot live unto God. But hear," said he, "what follows of these kind of things: for indeed many more there are from which the servant of God must abstain: from theft and cheating, from false witness, from covetousness, from boasting, and all other things of the like nature. Do these things seem to thee to be evil or not? Indeed they are very evil to the servants of God. Wherefore the servant of God must abstain from all these works. Keep thyself, therefore, from them, that thou mayest live unto God, and be written among those that abstain from them. And thus have I shown thee what things thou must avoid: now learn from what thou must not abstain. Abstain not from any good works, but do them. Hear," said he, "what the virtue of those good works is which thou must do, that thou mayest be saved. The first of all is faith, the fear of the Lord, charity, concord, equity, truth, patience, chastity. There is nothing better than these things in the life of man; who shall keep and do things in their life. Hear next what follow these. To minister to the widows; not to despise the fatherless and poor; to redeem the servants of God from necessity; to be hospitable (for in hospitality there is sometimes great fruit); not to be contentious, but be quiet; to be humble above all men; to reverence the aged; to labour to be righteous; to respect the brotherhood; to bear affronts; to be long-suffering; not to cast away those that have fallen from the faith, but to convert them, and make them be of good cheer; to admonish sinners; not to oppress those that are our debtors; and all other things of a like kind. Do these things seem to thee to

be good, or not?" And I said, "What can be better than these words?" "Live then," said he, "in these commandments, and do not depart from them. For if thou shalt keep all these commandments thou shalt live unto God. And all they that shall keep these commandments shall live unto God."

The Ninth Command.

That we must ask of God daily, and without doubting.

Again he said unto me, "Remove from thee all doubting, and question nothing at all when thou askest any thing of the Lord, saying within thyself, How shall I be able to ask anything of the Lord, and receive it, seeing I have so greatly sinned against Him? Do not think thus, but turn unto the Lord with all thy heart, and ask of Him without doubting, and thou shalt know the mercy of the Lord, how that He will not forsake thee, but will fulfil the request of thy soul. For God is not as man, mindful of the injuries He has received; but He forgets injuries, and has compassion upon His creature. Wherefore purify thy heart from all the vices of this present world, and observe the commands I have before delivered unto thee from God, and thou shalt receive whatsoever good things thou shalt ask, and nothing shall be wanting unto thee of all thy petitions, if thou shalt ask of the Lord without doubting. But they that are not such, shall obtain none of those things which they ask. For they that are full of faith ask all things with confidence, and receive from the Lord, because they ask without doubting. But he that doubts shall hardly live unto God, except he repent. Wherefore purify thy heart from doubting, and put on faith, and trust in God, and thou shalt receive all that thou shalt ask. But and if thou shouldst chance to ask somewhat, and not [immediately] receive it, yet do not, therefore, doubt, because thou hast not presently received the petition of thy soul. For it may be thou shalt not presently receive it, for thy trial, or else for some sin which thou knowest not. But do not thou leave off to ask, and then thou shalt receive. Else if thou shalt cease to ask, thou must complain of thyself, and not of God, that He has not given unto thee what thou didst desire. Consider,

therefore, this doubting, how cruel and pernicious it is, and how utterly it roots out many from the faith who were very faithful and firm. For this doubting is the daughter of the devil, and deals very wickedly with the servants of God. Despise it, therefore, and thou shalt rule over it on every occasion. Put on a firm and powerful faith; for faith promises all things, and perfects all things. But doubting will not believe that it shall obtain any thing but all it can do. Thou seest, therefore," says he, "how faith cometh from above, from God, and has great power. But doubting is an earthly spirit, and proceedeth from the devil, and has no strength. Do thou, therefore, keep the virtue of faith, and depart from doubting, in which is no virtue, and thou shalt live unto God. And all shall live unto God, as many as shall do these things."

The Tenth Command.

Of the sadness of the heart; and that we must take heed not to grieve the Spirit of God that is in us.

I. "Put all sadness far from thee; for it is the sister of doubting and of anger." "How, Sir," said I, "is it the sister of these? For sadness, and anger, and doubting, seem to me to be very different from one another." And he answered, "Art thou without sense, that thou dost not understand it? For sadness is the most mischievous of all spirits, and the worst to the servants of God: it destroys the spirits of all men, and torments the holy spirit; and again it saves." "Sir," said I, "I am very foolish, and understand not these things. I cannot apprehend how it can torment, and yet save." "Hear," said he, "and understand. They who never sought out the truth, nor inquired concerning the majesty of God, but only believed, are involved in the affairs of the heathen. And there is another lying prophet, that destroys the minds of the servants of God; that is, of those that are doubtful, not of those that fully trust in the Lord. Now those doubtful persons come to him, as to a Divine Spirit, and inquire of him what shall befall them. And this lying prophet, having no power in him of the Divine Spirit, answers them according to their demands; and fills their souls with promises according as they desire. Howbeit that prophet is vain, and answers vain

things to those who are themselves vain. And whatsoever is asked of him by vain men, he answers them vainly. Nevertheless he speaketh some things truly. For the devil fills him with his spirit, that he may overthrow some of the righteous.

II. "Whosoever, therefore, are strong in the faith of the Lord, and have put on the truth, they are not joined to such spirits, but depart from them. But they that are doubtful, and often repenting, like the heathens, consult them, and heap up to themselves great sin, serving idols. As many, therefore, as are such, inquire of them upon every occasion; worship idols, and are foolish, and void of the truth, For every spirit that is given from God needs not to be asked; but, having the power of the divinity, speaks all things of itself; because He comes from above, from the power of the Spirit of God. But he that being asked, speaks according to men's desires, and concerning many other affairs of this present world, understands not the things which relate unto God. For these spirits are darkened through such affairs and corrupted, and broken. As good vines, if they are neglected, are oppressed with weeds and thorns, and at last killed by them, so are the men who believe such spirits; they fall into many actions and businesses, and are void of sense; and when they think of things pertaining unto God, they understand nothing at all: but if at any time they chance to hear any thing concerning the Lord, their thoughts are upon their business. But they that have the fear of the Lord, and search out the truth concerning God, having all their thoughts towards the Lord, apprehend whatsoever is said to them, and forthwith understand it, because they have the fear of the Lord in them. For where the spirit of the Lord dwells, there is also much understanding added. Wherefore join thyself to the Lord, and thou shalt understand all things.

III. "Learn now, O unwise man! how sadness troubleth the holy spirit; and how it saves. When a man that is doubtful is engaged in any affair, and does not accomplish it by reason of his doubting, this sadness enters into him and grieves the holy spirit, and makes him sad. Again, anger, when it overtakes any man for any business, he is greatly moved: and then again sadness entereth into the heart of him who was moved with anger, and he is troubled for what

he hath done, and repenteth because he hath done amiss. This sadness, therefore, seemeth to bring salvation, because he repenteth of his evil deed. But both the other things, namely, doubting and sadness, such as before was mentioned, vex the spirit: doubting, because his work did not succeed; and sadness, because he angered the holy spirit. Remove, therefore, sadness from thyself; and afflict not the holy spirit which dwelleth in thee, lest he entreat God, and depart from thee. For the spirit of the Lord which is given to dwell in the flesh, endureth no such sadness. Wherefore clothe thyself with cheerfulness, which has always favour with the Lord, and thou shalt rejoice in it. For every cheerful man does well, and relishes those things that are good, and despises sadness. But the sad man does always wickedly. First, he doth wickedly, because he grieveth the holy spirit, which is given to man, being of a cheerful nature. And again he does ill, because he prays with sadness unto the Lord, and maketh not first a thankful acknowledgment unto Him of former mercies; and obtains not of God what he asks. For the prayer of a sad man has not efficacy to come up to the altar of God." And I said unto him, "Sir, why has not the prayer of a sad man virtue to come up to the altar of God?" "Because," said he, "that sadness remaineth in his heart. When, therefore, a man's prayer shall be accompanied with sadness, it will not suffer his requests to ascend pure to the altar of God. For as wine when it is mingled with vinegar has not the sweetness it had before; so sadness, being mixed with the holy spirit, suffers not a man's prayer to be the same that it would be otherwise. Wherefore cleanse thyself from sadness, which is evil, and thou shalt live unto God. And all others shall live unto God, as many as shall lay aside sadness, and put on cheerfulness."

The Eleventh Command.

That the spirits and prophets are to be tried by their works; and of a two-fold spirit.

I. He showed me certain men sitting upon benches, and one sitting in a chair: and he said unto me, "Seest thou those who sit upon the benches?" "Sir," said I, "I see

them." He answered, "They are the faithful; and he who sits in the chair is an earthly spirit. For he cometh not into the assembly of the faithful, but avoids it. But he joins himself to the doubtful and empty, and prophesies to them in corners and hidden places, and pleases them by speaking according to all the desires of their hearts. For he, placing himself among empty vessels, is not broken, but the one fitteth the other. But when he cometh into the company of just men, who are full of the Spirit of God, and they pray unto the Lord, that man is emptied, because that earthly spirit flies from him, and he is dumb, and cannot speak any thing. As if in a store-house you shall stop up wine or oil, and among those vessels shall place an empty jar, and shall afterwards come to open it, you shall find it empty as you stopped it up, so those empty prophets, when they come among the spirits of the just, are found to be such as they came."

II. I said, "How then shall a man be able to discern them?" "Consider what I am going to say concerning both kinds of men; and as I speak unto thee, so shalt thou prove the prophet of God, and the false prophet. And first, try the man who hath the spirit of God; because the spirit which is from above is humble, and quiet, and departs from all wickedness, and from the vain desires of the present world, and makes himself more humble than all men, and answers to none when he is asked, nor to every one singly; for the spirit of God doth not speak to a man when he will, but when God pleases. When, therefore, a man who hath the spirit of God shall come into the church of the righteous, who hath the faith of God, and they pray unto the Lord; then the holy angel of God fills that man with the Blessed Spirit, and he speaks in the congregation as he is moved of God. Thus, therefore, is the spirit of God known, because whosoever speaketh by the spirit of God, speaketh as the Lord will.

III. "Hear now concerning the earthly spirit, which is empty and foolish, and without virtue. And first of all, the man who is supposed to have the spirit (whereas he hath it not in reality) exalteth himself, and desires to have the first seat, and is wicked, and full of words, and spends his time in pleasure, and in all manner of voluptuousness, and receives the rewards of his divination, which if he receives not, he does not divine." "Should the spirit of God receive reward

and divine?" "It doth not become a prophet of God so to do. Thus you see the life of each of these kind of prophets. Wherefore prove the man by his life and works, who says that he hath the holy spirit: and believe the spirit which comes from God, and has power as such. But believe not the earthly and empty spirit, which is from the devil, in whom there is no faith nor virtue. Hear now the similitude which I am about to speak unto thee. Take a stone, and throw it up towards heaven; or take a spout of water, and mount it up thitherward, and see if thou canst reach unto heaven." "Sir," said I, "how can this be done? For neither of those things which you have mentioned are possible to be done." And he answered, "Therefore, as these things cannot be done, so is the earthly spirit without virtue, and without effect. Understand yet farther the power which cometh from above, in this similitude. The grains of hail that drop down are exceeding small; and yet when they fall upon the head of a man, how do they cause pain to it? And again; consider the droppings of a house, how the little drops falling upon the earth, work a hollow in the stones. So in like manner the least things which come from above, and fall upon the earth, have great force. Wherefore, join thyself to this spirit, which has power, and depart from the other, which is empty."

The Twelfth Command.

Of a two-fold desire: that the commands of God are not impossible; and that the devil is not to be feared by them that believe.

I. Again he said unto me, "Remove from thee all evil desires, and put on good and holy desires. For having put on a good desire, thou shalt hate that which is evil, and bridle it as thou wilt. But an evil desire is dreadful, and hard to be tamed. It is very horrible and wild, and by its wildness consumes men; and especially if a servant of God shall chance to fall into it, except he be very wise, he is ruined by it. For it destroys those who have not the garment of a good desire, and are engaged in the affairs of this present world, and delivers them unto death." "Sir," said I, "what are the works of an evil desire, which bring men unto death? Show

them to me, that I may depart from them." "Hear," said he, "by what works an evil desire bringeth the servants of God unto death. First of all, it is an evil desire to covet another man's wife, or for a woman to covet another's husband; as also to desire the dainties of riches, and multitude of superfluous meats, and drunkenness, and many delights. For in much delicacy there is folly; and many pleasures are needless to the servants of God. Such lusting, therefore, is evil and pernicious, which brings to death the servants of God. For all such lusting is from the devil. Whosoever, therefore, shall depart from all evil desires shall live unto God; but they that are subject unto them shall die for ever. For this evil lusting is deadly. Do thou, therefore, put on the desire of righteousness, and being armed with the fear of the Lord resist all wicked lusting. For this fear dwelleth in good desires; and when evil coveting shall see thee armed with the fear of the Lord, and resisting it, it will fly far from thee, and not appear before thee, but be afraid of thy armour; and thou shalt have the victory, and be crowned for it; and shalt attain unto that desire which is good, and shalt give the victory which thou hast obtained unto God, and shalt serve Him in doing what thou thyself wouldst do. For if thou shalt serve good desires, and be subject to them, thou shalt be able to get the dominion over thy wicked lustings, and they shall be subject to thee as thou wilt."

III. And I said, "Sir, I would know how to serve that desire which is good." "Hearken!" said he, "fear God, and put thy trust in Him, and love truth, and righteousness, and do that which is good. If thou shalt do these things, thou shalt be an approved servant of God, and shalt serve Him: and all others who shall in like manner serve a good desire shall live unto God." And when he had finished these twelve commands, he said unto me, "Thou hast now these commands; walk in them, and exhort those that hear them that they repent, and that they keep their repentance pure all the remaining days of their life: and fulfil diligently this ministry which I commit to thee, and thou shalt receive great advantage by it, and shalt find favour with all such as shall repent, and shall believe thy words. For I am with thee, and will force them to believe." And I said unto him, "Sir, these commands are great and excellent, and able to cheer the heart

of that man that shall be able to keep them. But, Sir, I cannot tell whether they can be observed by any man?" He answered, "Thou shalt easily keep these commands, and they shall not be hard; howbeit, if thou shalt suffer it once to enter into thy heart that they cannot be kept by any one, thou shalt not fulfil them. But now I say unto thee, if thou shalt not observe these commands, but shalt neglect them, thou shalt not be saved, nor thy children, nor thy house; because thou hast judged that these commands cannot be kept by man."

IV. These things he spake very angrily unto me, insomuch that he greatly affrighted me. For he changed his countenance, so that a man could not bear his anger. And when he saw me altogether troubled and confounded, he began to speak more moderately and cheerfully, saying, "O foolish, and without understanding! Unconstant, not knowing the majesty of God, how great and wonderful He is: who created the world for man, and hath made every creature subject unto him, and given him all power, that he should be able to fulfil all these commands. He is able," said he, "to fulfil all these commands, who has the Lord in his heart: but they who have the Lord only in their mouths, and their heart is hardened, and they are far from the Lord; to such persons these commands are hard and difficult. Put, therefore, ye that are empty and light in the faith, the Lord your God in your hearts, and ye shall perceive how that nothing is more easy than these commands, nor more pleasant, nor more gentle and holy: and turn yourselves to the Lord your God, and forsake the devil and his pleasures, because they are evil, and bitter, and impure. And fear not the devil, because he has no power over you. For I am with you, the messenger of repentance, who have the dominion over him. The devil does indeed affright men; but his terror is vain. Wherefore fear him not, and he will flee from you."

V. And I said unto Him, "Sir, hear me speak a few words unto you." He answered, "Say on." "A man indeed desires to keep the commandments of God; and there is no one but what prays unto God, that he may be able to keep His commandments. But the devil is hard, and by his power rules over the servants of God." And he said, "He cannot rule over the servants of God, who trust in Him with all their hearts. The devil may strive, but he cannot overcome them.

For if ye resist him, he will flee away with confusion from you. But they that are not full in the faith, fear the devil, as if he had some great power. For the devil tries the servants of God; and if he finds them empty, he destroys them. For as a man, when he fills up vessels with good wine, and among them puts a few vessels half full, and comes to try and taste of the vessels, does not try those that are full, because he knows that they are good, but tastes those that are half full, lest they should grow sour, (for vessels half full soon grow sour, and lose the taste of wine,) so the devil comes to the servants of God to try them. They that are full of faith resist him stoutly, and he departs from them, because he finds no place where to enter into them; then he goes to those that are not full of faith, and because he has place of entrance, he goes into them, and does what he will with them, and they become his servants.

VI. "But I, the messenger of repentance, say unto you, fear not the devil; for I am sent unto you, that I may be with you, as many as shall repent with your whole heart, and that I may confirm you in the faith. Believe, therefore, ye who by reason of your transgressions have forgot God, and your own salvation; and adding to your sins have made your life very heavy; that if ye shall turn to the Lord with your whole hearts, and shall serve Him according to His will, He will heal you of your former sins, and ye shall have dominion over all the works of the devil. Be not then afraid in the least of his threatenings, for they are without force, as the nerves of a dead man. But hearken unto me, and fear the Lord Almighty, who is able to save and to destroy you; and keep His commands, that ye may live unto God." And I said unto him, "Sir, I am now confirmed in all the commands of the Lord whilst that you are with me; and I know that you will break all the power of the devil. And we also shall overcome him, if we shall be able, through the help of the Lord, to keep these commands which you have delivered." "Thou shalt keep them," said he, "if thou shalt purify thy heart towards the Lord. And all they also shall keep them who shall cleanse their hearts from the vain desires of the present world, and shall live unto God."

THE
THIRD BOOK OF HERMAS,
WHICH IS CALLED HIS SIMILITUDES.

Similitude I.

That seeing we have no abiding city in this world, we ought to look after that which is to come.

AND he said unto me, "Ye know that ye who are the servants of the Lord, live here as in a pilgrimage; for your city is far off from this city. If, therefore, ye know your city in which ye are to dwell, why do you here buy estates, and provide yourselves with delicacies and stately buildings, and superfluous houses? For he that provides himself these things in this city, does not think of returning into his own city. O foolish, and doubtful, and wretched man! who understandest not that all these things belong to other men, and are under the power of another! For the Lord of this city saith unto thee, 'Either obey My laws, or depart out of My city.' What, therefore, shalt thou do, who art subject to a law in thine own city? Canst thou for thy estate, or for any of those things which thou hast provided, deny thy law? But if thou shalt deny it, and wilt afterwards return into thy own city, thou shalt not be received, but shalt be excluded thence. See, therefore, that like a man in another country, thou procure no more to thyself than what is necessary and sufficient for thee; and be ready, that when the God or Lord of this city shall drive thee out of it, thou mayst oppose His

law, and go into thine own city, where thou mayst, with all cheerfulness, live according to thine own law without wrong. Take heed, therefore, ye that serve God, and have Him in your hearts: work ye the works of God, being mindful both of His commands and of His promises, which He has promised; and be assured that He will make them good unto you, if ye shall keep His commandments. Instead, therefore, of the possessions that ye would otherwise purchase, redeem those that are in want from their necessities, as every one is able; justify the widows, judge the cause of the fatherless, and spend your riches and your wealth in such works as these. For, for this end has God enriched you, that ye might fulfil these kind of services. It is much better to do this than to buy lands or houses, because all such things shall perish with this present time. But what ye shall do for the name of the Lord, ye shall find in your city, and shall have joy without sadness or fear. Wherefore covet not the riches of the heathen; for they are destructive to the servants of God. But trade with your own riches which you possess, by which ye may attain unto everlasting joy. And do not commit adultery, nor touch any other man's wife, nor desire her; but covet that which is thy own business, and thou shalt be saved."

The Second Similitude.

As the vine is supported by the elm, so is the rich man helped by the prayers of the poor.

As I was walking into the field, and considered the elm and the vine, and thought with myself of their fruits, an angel appeared unto me, and said unto me, "What is it that thou thinkest upon thus long within thyself?" And I said unto him, "Sir, I think of this vine and this elm, because their fruits are fair." And he said unto me, "These two trees are set for a pattern to the servants of God." And I said unto him, "Sir, I would know in what the pattern of these trees which thou mentionest, does consist." "Hearken!" saith he, "seest thou this vine and this elm?" "Sir," said I, "I see them." "This vine," saith he, "is fruitful, but the elm is a tree without fruit. Nevertheless this vine, unless it were set by this elm, and supported by it, would not bear much fruit,

but lying along upon the ground, would bear but ill fruit, because it did not hang upon the elm: whereas now being supported upon the elm, it bears fruit both for itself, and for that. See, therefore, how the elm gives no less, but rather more fruit, than the vine." "How, Sir," said I, "does it bear more fruit than the vine?" "Because," said he, "the vine being supported upon the elm, gives both much and good fruit; whereas if it lay along upon the ground, it would bear but little, and that very ill too. This similitude, therefore, is set forth to the servants of God; and it represents the rich and poor man." I answered, "Sir, make this manifest unto me." "Hear!" said he, "the rich man has wealth; howbeit towards the Lord he is poor; for he is taken up about his riches, and prays but little to the Lord, and the prayers which he makes are lazy and without force. When, therefore, the rich man reaches out to the poor those things which he wants, the poor man prays unto the Lord for the rich; and God grants unto the rich man all good things, because the poor man is rich in prayer; and his requests have great power with the Lord. Then the rich man ministers all things to the poor, because he perceives that he is heard by the Lord; and he the more willingly, and without doubting, affords him what he wants, and takes care that nothing be lacking to him. And the poor man gives thanks unto the Lord for the rich, because they do both their work from the Lord. With men, therefore, the elm is not thought to give any fruit; and they know not, neither understand that its company being added to the vine, the vine bears a double increase, both for itself and for the elm. Even so the poor praying unto the Lord for the rich, are heard by Him; and their riches are increased, because they minister to the poor of their wealth. They are, therefore, both made partakers of each other's good works. Whosoever, therefore, shall do these things, he shall not be forsaken by the Lord, but shall be written in the book of life. Happy are they that are rich, and perceive themselves to be increased; for he that is sensible of this, will be able to minister somewhat to others."

The Third Similitude.

As the green trees in winter cannot be distinguished from the dry, so neither can the righteous from the wicked in this present world.

Again he showed me many trees whose leaves were shed, and which seemed to me to be withered, for they were all alike. And he said unto me, "Seest thou these trees?" I said, "Sir, I see that they look like dry trees." He answering, said unto me, "These trees are like unto the men who live in this present world." I replied, "Sir, why are they like unto dry trees?" "Because," said he, "neither the righteous nor unrighteous are known from one another, but are all alike in this present world. For this world is as the winter to the righteous men, because they are not known, but dwell among sinners. As in the winter all the trees, having lost their leaves, are like dry trees, nor can it be discerned which are dry and which are green; so in this present world, neither the righteous, nor wicked, are discerned from each other, but they are alike.

The Fourth Similitude.

As in summer the living trees are distinguished from the dry by their fruit and green leaves, so in the world to come, the righteous shall be distinguished from the unrighteous by their happiness.

Again he showed me many other trees, of which some had leaves, and others appeared dry and withered. And he said unto me, "Seest thou these trees?" I answered, "Sir, I see them; and some are dry, and others full of leaves." "These trees," saith he, "which are green are the righteous, who shall possess the world to come. For the world to come is the summer to the righteous; but to sinners it is the winter. When, therefore, the mercy of the Lord shall shine forth, then they who serve God shall be made manifest and plain unto all. For as in the summer the fruit of every tree is shown and made manifest, so also the works of the righteous shall be declared and made manifest, and they shall all be restored in

that world merry and joyful. For the other kind of men, namely, the wicked, like the trees which thou sawest dry, shall as such be found dry, and without fruit in that other world, and like dry wood shall be burnt; and it shall be made manifest that they have done evil all the time of their life; and they shall be burnt, because they have sinned, and have not repented of their sins. And also all the other nations shall be burnt, because they have not acknowledged God their Creator. Do thou, therefore, bring forth good fruit, that in the summer thy fruit may be known; and keep thyself from much business, and thou shalt not offend. For they who are involved in much business, sin much; because they are taken up with their affairs, and serve not God. And how can a man that does not serve God, ask any thing of God, and receive it? But they who serve Him ask, and receive what they desire. But if a man has only one thing to follow, he may serve God; because his mind is not taken off from God, but he serves Him with a pure mind. If, therefore, thou shalt do this, thou mayest have fruit in the world to come; and all, as many as shall do in like manner, shall bring forth fruit."

The Fifth Similitude.

Of a true fast, and the rewards of it; also of the cleanness of the body.

I. As I was fasting, and sitting down in a certain mountain, and giving thanks unto God for all the things that He had done unto me, behold I saw the shepherd who was wont to converse with me, sitting by me, and saying unto me, "What has brought thee hither thus early in the morning?" I answered, "Sir, to-day I keep a station." He answered, "What is a station?" I replied, "It is a fast." He said, "What is that fast?" I answered, "I fast as I have been wont to do." "Ye know not," said he, "what it is to fast unto God; nor is this a fast which ye fast, profiting nothing with God." "Sir," said I, "what makes you speak thus?" He replied, "I speak it because this is not the true fast which you think that you fast; but I will show you what that is which is a complete fast, and acceptable unto God. Hearken!" said he, "the Lord does not desire such a needless fast; for by fasting in this

manner, thou advancest nothing in righteousness. But the true fast is this ; do nothing wickedly in thy life, but serve God with a pure mind, and keep His commandments, and walk according to His precepts, nor suffer any wicked desire to enter into thy mind. But trust in the Lord, that if thou dost these things, and fearest Him, and abstainest from every evil work, thou shalt live unto God. If thou shalt do this, thou shalt perfect a great fast, and an acceptable one unto the Lord.

II. "Hearken unto the similitude which I am about to propose unto thee, as to this matter. A certain man having a farm, and many servants, planted a vineyard in a certain part of his estate for his posterity ; and taking a journey into a far country, chose one of his servants which he thought the most faithful and approved, and delivered the vineyard into his care, commanding him that he should stake up his vines, which if he did, and fulfilled his command, he promised to give him his liberty. Nor did he command him to do any thing more, and so went into a far country. After then that that servant had taken that charge upon him, he did whatsoever his lord commanded him : and when he had staked the vineyard, and found it to be full of weeds, he began to think with himself, saying, I have done what my lord commanded me ; I will now dig this vineyard, and when it is digged it will be more beautiful ; and the weeds being pulled up, it will bring forth more fruit, and not be choked by the weeds. So setting about his work, he digged it, and plucked up all the weeds that were in it ; and so the vineyard became very beautiful and prosperous, not being choked with weeds. After some time the lord of the vineyard comes, and goes into the vineyard ; and when he saw that it was handsomely staked, and digged, and the weeds plucked up that were in it, and the vines flourishing, he rejoiced greatly at the care of his servant : and calling his son, whom he loved, and who was to be his heir, and his friends with whom he was wont to consult, he tells them what he had commanded his servant to do, and what his servant had done more : and they immediately congratulated that servant, that he had received so full a testimony from his lord. Then he said unto them, I, indeed, promised this servant his liberty, if he observed the command which I gave him : and he observed it, and besides he has done a good work to my vineyard, which has exceedingly pleased me. Wherefore for this work which

he hath done, I will make him my heir together with my son; because that when he saw what was good, he neglected it not, but did it. This design of the Lord both his son and his friends approved, namely, that his servant should be heir together with his son. Not long after this, the master of the family calling together his friends, sent from his supper several kinds of food to that servant. Which when he had received, he took so much of them as was sufficient for himself, and divided the rest among his fellow-servants; which, when they had received, they rejoiced, and wished that he might find yet greater favour with his lord for what he had done to them. When his lord heard all these things, he was again filled with great joy, and calling again his friends and his son together, he related to them what his servant had done with the meats which he had sent unto him. They, therefore, so much the more assented to the master of the household, that he ought to make that servant his heir together with his son."

III. I said unto him, "Sir, I know not these similitudes, neither can I understand them, unless you expound them unto me." "I will," says he, "expound all things unto thee whatsoever I have talked with thee, or shown unto thee. Keep the commandments of the Lord and thou shalt be approved, and shalt be written in the number of those that keep His commandments. But if besides those things which the Lord hath commanded, thou shalt add some good thing, thou shalt purchase to thyself a greater dignity, and be in more favour with the Lord than thou shouldst otherwise have been. If, therefore, thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord, and shalt add to them these stations, thou shalt rejoice; but especially if thou shalt keep them according to my commands." I said unto him, "Sir, whatsoever thou shalt command me, I will observe; for I know that thou wilt be with me." "I will," said he, "be with thee, who hast taken up such a resolution; and I will be with all those who purpose in like manner. This fast," saith he, "whilst thou dost also observe the commandments of the Lord, is exceeding good. Thus, therefore, shalt thou keep it. First of all, take heed to thyself, and keep thyself from every wicked act, and from every filthy word, and from every hurtful desire; and purify thy mind from all the vanity of this present world. If thou shalt observe these things, this fast shall be right. Thus, therefore, do.

Having performed what is before written, that day on which thou fastest thou shalt taste nothing at all but bread and water; and computing the quantity of food which thou art wont to eat upon other days, thou shalt lay aside the expense which thou shouldst have made that day, and give it unto the widow, the fatherless, and the poor. And thus thou shalt perfect the humiliation of thy soul, that he who receives of it may satisfy his soul, and his prayer come up to the Lord God for thee. If, therefore, thou shalt thus accomplish thy fast, as I command thee, thy sacrifice shall be acceptable unto the Lord, and thy fast shall be written in His book. This station, thus performed, is good, and pleasing, and acceptable unto the Lord. These things, if thou shalt observe with thy children, and with all thy house, thou shalt be happy. And whosoever when they hear these things shall do them, they also shall be happy; and whatsoever they shall ask of the Lord they shall receive it."

IV. And I prayed him that he would expound unto me the similitude of the farm, and the lord, and of the vineyard, and of the servant that had staked the vineyard, and of the weeds that were plucked out of the vineyard, and of his son, and his friends which he took into counsel with him. For I understood that that was a similitude. He said unto me, "Thou art very bold in asking: for thou oughtest not to ask any thing; because if it be fitting to show it unto thee, it shall be showed unto thee." I answered him, "Sir, whatsoever thou shalt show me, without explaining it unto me, I shall in vain see it if I do not understand what it is. And if thou shalt propose any similitudes, and not expound them, I shall in vain hear them." He answered me again, saying, "Whosoever is the servant of God, and has the Lord in his heart, he desires understanding of Him, and receives it; and he explains every similitude, and understands the words of the Lord which need an inquiry. But they that are lazy and slow to pray, doubt to seek from the Lord; although the Lord be of such an extraordinary goodness, that without ceasing He giveth all things to them that ask of Him. Thou, therefore, who art strengthened by that venerable messenger, and hast received such a powerful gift of prayer, seeing thou art not slothful, why dost thou not now ask understanding of the Lord, and receive it?" I said unto him, "Seeing I have thee

present, it is necessary that I should seek it of thee, and ask thee; for thou showest all things unto me, and speakest to me when thou art present. But if I should see or hear these things when thou wert not present, I would then ask the Lord that He would show them unto me."

V. And he replied, "I said a little before that thou wert subtle and bold, in that thou askest the meaning of these similitudes. But because thou still persistest, I will unfold to thee this parable which thou desirest, that thou mayest make it known unto all men. Hear, therefore," said he, "and understand. The farm before mentioned denotes the whole earth. The lord of the farm is He who created and finished all things, and gave virtue unto them. His son is the Holy Spirit: the servant is the Son of God: the vineyard is the people whom He saves. The stakes are the messengers which are set over them by the Lord, to support His people. The weeds that are plucked up out of the vineyard, are the sins which the servants of God had committed. The food which He sent him from His supper, are the commands which He gave to His people by His Son. The friends whom He called to counsel with Him, are the holy angels whom He first created. The absence of the master of the household, is the time that remains unto His coming." I said unto him, "Sir, all these things are very excellent, and wonderful, and good. But," continued I, "could I, or any other man besides, though never so wise, have understood these things? Wherefore now, Sir, tell me what I ask." He replied, "Ask me what thou wilt." "Why," said I, "is the Son of God, in this parable, put in the place of a servant?"

VI. "Hearken," said he; "The Son of God is not put in the condition of a servant, but in great power and authority." I said unto him, "How, Sir? I understand it not." "Because," said he, "the Son set His messengers over those whom the Father delivered unto Him, to keep every one of them; but He Himself laboured very much, and suffered much, that He might blot out their offences. For no vineyard can be digged without much labour and pains. Wherefore having blotted out the sins of His people, He showed to them the paths of life, giving them the law which He had received of the Father. You see," said he, "that He is the Lord of His people, having received all power from His Father. But why

the Lord did take His Son into counsel, about dividing the inheritance, and the good angels, hear now: that Holy Spirit which was created first of all, He placed in the body in which God should dwell; namely, in a chosen body, as it seemed good to Him. This body therefore, into which the Holy Spirit was brought, served that spirit, walking rightly and purely in modesty, nor ever defiled that spirit. Seeing, therefore, the body at all times obeyed the Holy Spirit, and laboured rightly and chastely with Him, nor faltered at any time—that body, being wearied, conversed indeed servilely—but being mightily approved to God with the Holy Spirit, was accepted by Him. For such a stout course pleased God, because He was not defiled in the earth, keeping the Holy Spirit. He called, therefore, to counsel, His Son and the good angels, that there might be some place of standing given to this body, which had served the Holy Spirit without blame; lest it should seem to have lost the reward of its service: for every pure body shall receive its reward, that is found without spot, in which the Holy Spirit has been appointed to dwell. And thus you have now the exposition of this parable also."

VII. "Sir," said I, "I now understand your meaning, since I have heard this exposition." "Hearken farther," said he; "keep this thy body clean and pure, that the spirit which shall dwell in it may bear witness unto it, and be judged to have been with thee. Also take heed that it be not instilled into thy mind, that this body perishes, and thou abuse it to any lust. For if thou shalt defile thy body, thou shalt also at the same time defile the Holy Spirit; and if thou shalt defile the Holy Spirit, thou shalt not live." And I said, "What if through ignorance this should have been already committed, before a man heard these words; how can he attain unto salvation, who has thus defiled his body?" He replied, "As for men's former actions, which through ignorance they have committed, God only can afford a remedy unto them; for all power belongeth unto Him. But now guard thyself; and seeing God is almighty and merciful, He will grant a remedy to what thou hast formerly done amiss, if, for the time to come, thou shalt not defile thy body and spirit; for they are companions together, and the one cannot be defiled, but the other will be so too. Keep, therefore, both of them pure, and thou shalt live unto God."

The Sixth Similitude.

Of two sorts of voluptuous men, and of their death, defection, and of the continuance of their pains.

I. As I was sitting at home, and praising God for all the things which I had seen, and was thinking concerning the commands, that they were exceeding good, and great, and honest, and pleasant, and such as were able to bring a man to salvation, I said thus within myself, "I shall be happy if I shall walk according to these commands; and whosoever shall walk in them shall live unto God." Whilst I was speaking on this wise within myself, I saw him whom I had before been wont to see, sitting by me; and he spake thus unto me: "What doubtest thou concerning my commands, which I have delivered unto thee? They are good, doubt not; but trust in the Lord, and thou shalt walk in them. For I will give thee strength to fulfil them. These commands are profitable to those who shall repent of those sins which they have formerly committed, if for the time to come they shall not continue in them. Whosoever therefore, ye be that repent, cast away from you the naughtiness of the present world, and put on all virtue and righteousness; and so shall ye be able to keep these commands, and not sin from henceforth any more. For if ye shall keep yourselves from sin for the time to come, ye shall cut off a great deal of your former sins. Walk in my commands, and ye shall live unto God. These things have I spoken unto you." And when he had said this, he added, "Let us go into the field, and I will show thee shepherds of sheep." And I replied, "Sir, let us go." And we came into a certain field, and there he showed me a young shepherd, finely arrayed, with his garments of a purple colour. And he fed large flocks; and his sheep were full of pleasure, and in much delight and cheerfulness; and they, skipping, ran here and there. And the shepherd took very great satisfaction in his flock; and the countenance of that shepherd was cheerful, running up and down among his flock.

II. Then the angel said unto me, "Seest thou this shepherd?" I answered, "Sir, I see him." He said unto me, "This is the messenger of delight and pleasure. He, therefore, corrupts the minds of the servants of God, and turns them from the truth, delighting them with many pleasures, and

they perish. For they forget the commands of the living God, and live in luxury and in vain pleasures; and are corrupted by this evil angel, some of them even unto death; and others to a falling away." I replied, "I understand not what you mean, by saying, unto death, and to a falling away." "Hear!" says he; "all those sheep which thou sawest exceedingly joyful, are such as have for ever departed from God, and given themselves up to the lusts of this present time. To these, therefore, there is no return, by repentance unto life; because that to their other sins they have added this, that they have blasphemed the name of the Lord. These kind of men are ordained unto death. But those sheep which thou sawest not leaping, but feeding in one place, are such as have, indeed, given themselves up to pleasures and delights, but have not spoken anything wickedly against the Lord. These, therefore, are only fallen off from the truth, and so have yet hope laid up for them in repentance. For such a falling off hath some hope still left of a renewal; but they that are dead are utterly gone for ever." Again we went a little farther forward; and he showed me a great shepherd, who had as it were a rustic figure, clad with a white goat's skin, having his bag upon his shoulder, and in his hand a stick full of knots, and very hard, and a whip in his other hand; and his countenance was stern and sour, enough to affright a man: such was his look. He took from that young shepherd such sheep as lived in pleasures, but did not skip up and down, and drove them into a certain steep craggy place, full of thorns and briars, insomuch that they could not get themselves free from them, but, being entangled in them, fed upon thorns and briars, and were grievously tormented with his whipping; for he still drove them on, and afforded them not any place, or time, to stand still.

III. When, therefore, I saw them so cruelly whipped and afflicted, I was grieved for them; because they were greatly tormented, nor had they any rest afforded them. And I said unto the shepherd that was with me, "Sir, who is this cruel and implacable shepherd, who is moved with no compassion towards these sheep?" He answered, "This shepherd is indeed one of the holy angels; but is appointed for the punishment of sinners. To him, therefore, are delivered those who have erred from God, and served the lusts and

pleasures of this world. For this cause he punishes them, every one according to their deserts, with cruel and various kind of pains." "Sir," said I, "I would know what kind of pains they are which everyone undergoes?" "Hearken!" said he, "the several pains and torments are those which men every day undergo in their present lives. For some suffer losses, others poverty, others divers sicknesses. Some are unsettled; others suffer injuries from those that are unworthy, others fall under many other trials and inconveniences. For many, with an unsettled design, aim at many things, and it profiteth them not: and they say that they have not success in their undertakings. They do not call to mind what they have done amiss, and they complain of the Lord. When, therefore, they shall have undergone all kind of vexation and inconvenience, then they are delivered over to me for good instruction, and are confirmed in the faith of the Lord, and serve the Lord all the rest of their days with a pure mind. And when they begin to repent of their sins, then they call to mind their works which they have done amiss, and give honour to God, saying that He is a just judge, and they have deservedly suffered all things according to their deeds. Then for what remains of their lives, they serve God with a pure mind, and have success in all their undertakings, and receive from the Lord whatever they desire. And then they give thanks unto the Lord, that they were delivered unto me; nor do they suffer any more cruelty."

IV. I said unto him, "Sir, I entreat you still to show me now one thing." "What," said he, "dost thou ask?" I said unto him, "Are they who depart from the fear of God tormented for the same time that they enjoyed their false delight and pleasures?" He answered me, "They are tormented for the same time." And I said unto him, "They are then tormented but little; whereas they who enjoy their pleasures so as to forget God, ought to endure seven times as much punishment." He answered me, "Thou art foolish, neither understandest thou the efficacy of this punishment." I said unto him, "Sir, if I understood it, I would not desire you to tell me." "Hearken!" said he, "and learn what the force of both is, both of the pleasure and of the punishment. An hour of pleasure is terminated within its own space: but one hour of punishment has the efficacy of thirty

days. Whosoever, therefore, enjoys his false pleasure for one day, and is one day tormented, that one day of punishment is equivalent to a whole year's space. Thus look how many days any one pursues his pleasures, so many years is he punished for it. You see, therefore, how that the time of worldly enjoyments is but short, but that of pain and torments a great deal more."

V. I replied, "Sir, forasmuch as I do not understand at all these times of pleasure and pain, I entreat you that you would explain yourself more clearly concerning them." He answered me, saying, "Thy foolishness still sticks unto thee. Shouldst thou not rather purify thy mind, and serve God? Take heed, lest when thy time is fulfilled, thou be found still unwise. Hear then, as thou desirest, that thou mayst the more easily understand. He that gives himself up one day to his pleasures and delights, and does whatsoever his soul desires, is full of great folly, nor understands what he does, but the day following forgets what he did the day before. For delight and worldly pleasure are not kept in memory, by reason of the folly that is rooted in them. But when pain and torment befall a man a day, he is in effect troubled the whole year after; because his punishment continues firm in his memory. Wherefore he remembers it with sorrow the whole year; and then calls to mind his vain pleasure and delight, and perceives that for the sake of that he was punished. Whosoever, therefore, have delivered themselves over to such pleasures, are thus punished; because that when they had life, they rendered themselves liable to death." I said unto him, "Sir, what pleasures are hurtful?" He answered, "That is pleasure to every man which he does willingly. For the angry man, gratifying his passion, perceives pleasure in it; and so the adulterer, and drunkard; the slanderer, and liar; the covetous man, and the defrauder; and whosoever commits any thing like unto these; because he followeth his evil disposition, he receives a satisfaction in the doing of it. All these pleasures and delights are hurtful to the servants of God. For these, therefore, they are tormented and suffer punishment. There are also pleasures that bring salvation unto men. For many when they do what is good find pleasure in it, and are attracted by the delights of it. Now this pleasure is profitable to the servants of God, and

brings life to such men, but those hurtful pleasures, which were before mentioned, bring torments and punishment. And whosoever shall continue in them, and shall not repent of what they have done, shall bring death upon themselves."

The Seventh Similitude.

That they who repent, must bring forth fruits worthy of repentance.

After a few days I saw the same person that before talked with me, in the same field in which I had seen those shepherds. And he said unto me, "What seekest thou?" "Sir," said I, "I came to entreat you that you would command the shepherd, who is the minister of punishment, to depart out of my house, because he greatly afflicts me." And he answered, "It is necessary for thee to endure inconveniences and vexations; for so that good angel hath commanded concerning thee, because he would try thee." "Sir," said I, "what so great offence have I committed, that I should be delivered to this messenger?" "Hearken!" said he; "thou art indeed, guilty of many sins, yet not so many that thou shouldst be delivered to this messenger; but thy house hath committed many sins and offences; and, therefore, that good messenger, being grieved at their doings, commanded that for some time thou shouldst suffer affliction, that they may both repent of what they have done, and may wash themselves from all the lusts of this present world. When, therefore, they shall have repented, and be purified, then that messenger which is appointed over thy punishment shall depart from thee." I said unto him, "Sir, if they have behaved themselves so as to anger that good angel, yet what have I done?" He answered, "They cannot otherwise be afflicted, unless thou, who art the head of the family, suffer. For whatsoever thou shalt suffer, they must needs feel it, but as long as thou shalt stand well established, they cannot experience any vexation." I replied, "But, Sir, behold, they also now repent with all their hearts." "I know," says he, "that they repent with all their hearts; but dost thou, therefore, think that their offences, who repent, are immediately blotted out? No, they are not presently; but he that repents must afflict his soul, and show

himself humble in all his affairs, and undergo many and divers vexations. And when he shall have suffered all things that were appointed for him, then, perhaps, He that made him, and formed all things besides, will be moved with compassion towards him, and afford him some remedy; and especially if He shall perceive his heart, who repents, to be pure from every will work. But at present it is expedient for thee, and for thy house, to be grieved; and it is needful that thou shouldst endure much vexation, as the angel of the Lord who committed thee unto me has commanded. Rather give thanks unto the Lord, that, knowing what was to come, He thought thee worthy to whom he should foretell that trouble was coming upon thee, who art able to bear it." I said unto him, "Sir, be but thou also with me, and I shall easily undergo any trouble." "I will," said he, "be with thee; and I will entreat the messenger who is set over thy punishment, that he would moderate his afflictions towards thee. And, moreover, thou shalt suffer adversity but for a little time, and then thou shalt again be restored to thy former state; only continue on in the humility of thy mind. Obey the Lord with a pure heart, thou and thy house, and thy children; and walk in the commandments which I have delivered unto thee; and then thy repentance may be firm and pure. And if thou shalt keep these things with thy house, thy inconveniences shall depart from thee. And all vexation shall in like manner depart from all those whosoever shall walk according to these commands."

The Eighth Similitude.

That there are many kinds of elect, and of repenting sinners: and how all of them shall receive a reward proportionable to the measure of their repentance and good works.

I. Again he showed me a willow, which covered the fields and the mountains, under whose shadow came all such as were called by the name of the Lord. And by that willow stood an angel of the Lord, very excellent and lofty; and did cut down boughs from that willow with a great hook; and reached out to the people that were under the shadow of that willow, little rods, as it were about a foot long. And when all

of them had taken them, he laid aside his hook, and the tree continued entire, as I had before seen it. At which I wondered, and mused within myself. Then that shepherd said unto me, "Forbear to wonder that that tree continues whole, notwithstanding so many boughs have been cut off from it; but stay a little, for now it shall be shown thee what that angel means, who gave those rods to the people." So he again demanded the rods of them; and in the same order that every one had received them, was he called to him, and restored his rod; which when he had received, he examined them. From some he received them dry and rotten, and as it were touched with the moth: those he commanded to be separated from the rest, and placed by themselves. Others gave him their rods dry, indeed, but not touched with the moth: these also he ordered to be set by themselves. Others gave in their rods half dry: these also were set apart. Others gave in their rods half dry and cleft: these too were set by themselves. Others brought in their rods one half dry and the other green; and these were in like manner placed by themselves. Others delivered up their rods two parts green, and the third dry; and they too were set apart. Others brought their rods two parts dry, and the third green; and were also placed by themselves. Others delivered up their rods less dry (for there was but a very little, to wit, their tops dry), but they had clefts; and these were set in like manner by themselves. In the rods of others there was but a little green, and the rest dry; and these were set aside by themselves. Others came and brought their rods green as they had received them, and the greatest part of the people brought their rods thus; and the messenger greatly rejoiced at these, and they also were put apart by themselves. Others brought their rods not only green, but full of branches; and these were set aside, being also received by the angel with great joy. Others brought their rods green with branches, and those also some fruit upon them. They who had such rods, were very cheerful; and the angel himself took great joy at them; nor was the shepherd that stood with me less pleased with them.

II. Then the angel of the Lord commanded crowns to be brought: and the crowns were brought, made of palms; and the angel crowned those men in whose rods he found the young branches with fruit, and commanded them to go into

the tower. He also sent those into the tower in whose rods he found branches without fruit, giving a seal unto them. For they had the same garment, that is, one white as snow; with which he bade them go into the tower. And so he did to those who returned their rods green as they received them, giving them a white garment, and so sent them away to go into the tower. Having done this, he said to the shepherd that was with me, "I go my way; but do thou send these within the walls, every one into the place in which he has deserved to dwell; examining first their rods, but examine them diligently, that no one deceive thee. But and if any one shall escape thee, I will try them upon the altar." Having said this to the shepherd, he departed. After he was gone, the shepherd said unto me, "Let us take the rods from them all, and plant them; if perchance they may grow green again." I said unto him, "Sir, how can those dry rods ever grow green again?" He answered me, "That tree is a willow, and always loves to live. If, therefore, these rods shall be planted, and receive a little moisture, many of them will recover themselves. Wherefore I will try, and will pour water upon them; and if any of them can live, I will rejoice with him; but if not, at least by this means I shall be found not to have neglected my part." Then he commanded me to call them; and they all came unto him, every one in the rank in which he stood, and gave him their rods; which, having received, he planted every one of them in their several orders. And after he had planted them all, he poured much water upon them, insomuch that they were covered with water, and did not appear above it. Then when he had watered them, he said unto me, "Let us depart, and after a little time, we will return and visit them. For He who created this tree, would have all those live that receive rods from it. And I hope, now that these rods are thus watered, many of them, receiving in the moisture, will recover."

III. I said unto him, "Sir, tell me what this tree denotes? for I am greatly astonished, that after so many branches have been cut off, it seems still to be whole; nor does there any thing the less of it appear to remain, which greatly amazes me." He answered, "Hearken! This great tree which covers the plains and the mountains, and all the earth, is the law of God, published throughout the whole world. Now

this law is the Son of God, who is preached to all the ends of the earth. The people that stand under its shadow, are those which have heard His preaching, and believed. The great and venerable angel which you saw, was Michael, who has the power over this people, and governs them. For he has planted the law in the hearts of those who have believed; and, therefore, he visits them to whom he has given the law, to see if they have kept it. And he examines every one's rod; and of those, many that are weakened; for those rods are the law of the Lord. Then he discerns all those who have not kept the law, knowing the place of every one of them." I said unto him, "Sir, why did he send away some to the tower, and left others here to you?" He replied, "Those who have transgressed the law which they received from him, are left in my power, that they may repent of their sins: but they who fulfilled the law and kept it, are under his power." "But who then," said I, "are those who went into the tower crowned?" He replied, "All such as having striven with the devil, have overcome him, are crowned; and they are those who have suffered hard things that they might keep the law. But they who gave up their rods green, and with young branches, but without fruit, have, indeed, endured trouble for the same law, but have not suffered death; neither have they denied their holy law. They who have delivered up their rods green as they received them, are those who are modest and just, and have lived with a very pure mind, and kept the commandments of God. The rest thou shalt know when I shall have considered those rods which I have planted and watered."

IV. After a few days we returned; and in the same place stood that glorious angel, and I stood by him. Then he said unto me, "Gird thyself with a towel, and serve me." And I girded myself with a clean towel, which was made of coarse cloth. And when he saw me girded, and ready to minister unto him, he said, "Call those men whose rods have been planted, every one in his order as they gave them." And he brought me into the field; and I called them all, and they all stood ready in their several ranks. Then he said unto them, "Let every one pluck up his rod, and bring it unto me." And first they delivered theirs whose rods had been dry and rotten. And those whose rods still continued so, he com-

manded to stand apart. Then they came whose rods had been dry but not rotten. Some of these delivered in their rods green; others dry and rotten, as if they had been touched by the moth. Those who gave them up green he commanded to stand apart; but those whose rods were dry and rotten he caused to stand with the first sort. Then came they whose rods had been half dry and cleft; many of these gave up their rods green and uncleft. Others delivered them up green with branches, and fruit upon the branches, like unto theirs who went crowned into the tower. Others delivered them up dry, but not rotten, and some gave them as they were before half dry and cleft. Every one of these he ordered to stand apart, some by themselves, others in their respective ranks.

V. Then came they whose rods had been green, but cleft. These delivered their rods altogether green, and stood in their own order. And the shepherd rejoiced at these, because they were all changed and free from their clefts. Then they gave in their rods, who had them half green and half dry. Of these some were found wholly green; others half dry; others green, with young shoots. And all these were sent away, every one to his proper rank. Then they gave up their rods, who had them before two parts green, and the third dry. Many of these gave in their rods green; many half dry; the rest dry, but not rotten. So these were sent away, each to his proper place. Then came they who had, before, their rods two parts dry, and the third green: many of these delivered up their rods half dry; others dry and rotten; others half dry and cleft; but few green. And all these were set every one in his own rank. Then they reached in their rods, in which there was before but a little green, and the rest dry. Their rods were for the most part found green, having little boughs with fruit upon them; and the rest altogether green. And the shepherd upon sight of these rejoiced exceedingly, because he had found them thus: and they also went to their proper orders.

VI. Now after he had examined all their rods, he said unto me, "I told thee that this tree loved life: thou seest how many have repented, and attained unto salvation." "Sir," said I, "I see it." "That thou mightest know," saith he, "that the goodness and mercy of the Lord is great, and to be had in honour; who gave His spirit to them that were found

worthy of repentance." I answered, "Sir, why then did not all of them repent?" He replied, "Those whose minds the Lord foresaw would be pure, and that they would serve Him with all their hearts, to them He gave repentance. But for those whose deceit and wickedness He beheld, and perceived that they would not truly return unto Him, to them He denied any return unto repentance, lest they should again blaspheme His law with wicked words." I said unto him, "Now, Sir, make known unto me, what is the place of every one of those who have given up their rods, and what their portion; that when they who have not kept their seal entire, but have wasted the seal which they received, shall hear and believe these things, they may acknowledge their evil deeds and repent; and receiving again their seal from you, may give glory to God, that He was moved with compassion towards them, and sent you to renew their spirits." "Hearken!" said he; "they whose rods have been found dry and rotten, and as it were touched with the moth, are the deserters and betrayers of the Church; who with the rest of their crimes, have also blasphemed the Lord, and denied His name which had been called upon them. Therefore all these are dead unto God; and thou seest that none of them have repented, although they have heard my commands, which thou hast delivered unto them. From these men, therefore, life is far distant. They also who have delivered up their rods dry, but not rotten, have not been far from them; for they have been counterfeits, and brought in evil doctrines, and have perverted the servants of God, but especially those who had sinned, not suffering them to return unto repentance, but keeping them back by their false doctrines. These, therefore, have hope; and thou seest that many of them have repented, since the time that thou hast laid my commands before them; and many more will yet repent. But they that shall not repent, shall lose both repentance and life. But they that have repented, their place is begun to be within the first walls, and some of them are even gone into the tower. Thou seest, therefore," said he, "that in the repentance of sinners there is life; but that for those who repent not, death is prepared.

VII. "Hear now concerning those who gave in their rods half dry, and full of clefts. They whose rods were only half dry are the doubtful; for they are neither living nor dead.

But they who delivered in their rods not only half dry, but also full of clefts, are both doubtful and evil speakers; who detract from those that are absent, and have never peace among themselves, and that envy one another. Howbeit, to these also repentance is offered, for thou seest that some of these have repented. Now all those of this kind who have quickly repented shall have a place in the tower; but they who have been more slow in their repentance shall dwell within the walls; but they that shall not repent, but shall continue on in their wicked doings, shall die the death. As for those who had their rods green, but yet cleft, they are such as were always faithful and good, but they had some envy and strife among themselves concerning dignity and pre-eminence. Now, all such are vain, and without understanding, as contend with one another about these things. Nevertheless, seeing they are otherwise good, if when they shall hear these commands, they shall amend themselves, and shall at my persuasion suddenly repent, they shall at last dwell in the tower, as they who have truly and worthily repented. But if any one shall again return to his dissension, he shall be shut out from the tower, and shall lose his life. For the life of those who keep the commandments of the Lord, consists in doing what they are commanded, not in principality, or in any other dignity. For by forbearance and humility of mind men shall attain unto life, but by seditions and contempt of the law they shall purchase death unto themselves.

VIII. "They who in their rods had one half dry and the other green, are those who are engaged in many affairs of the world, and are not joined to the saints. For which cause half of them liveth, and half is dead. Wherefore, many of these, since the time that they have heard my commands, have repented, and begun to dwell in the tower. But some of them have wholly fallen away; to these there is no more place for repentance. For by reason of their present interests they have blasphemed and denied God; and for this wickedness they have lost life. And of these many are still in doubt: these may yet return; and if they shall quickly repent they shall have a place in the tower; but if they shall be more slow they shall dwell within the walls; but if they shall not repent they shall die. As for those who had two parts of their rods green and the third dry, they have, by manifold

ways, denied the Lord. Of these many have repented, and found a place in the tower, and many have altogether departed from God. These have utterly lost life. And some, being in a doubtful state, have raised up dissensions: these may yet return, if they shall suddenly repent, and not continue in their lusts; but if they shall continue in their evil-doing they shall die.

IX. "They who gave in their rods two parts dry and the other green are those who have, indeed, been faithful, but withal rich and full of good things; and thereupon have desired to be famous among the heathen which are without, and have thereby fallen into great pride, and begun to aim at high matters, and to forsake the truth: nor were they joined to the saints, but lived with the heathen; and this life seemed the more pleasant to them. Howbeit they have not departed from God, but continued in the faith; only they have not wrought the works of faith. Many, therefore, of these have repented, and begun to dwell in the tower. Yet others, still living among the heathen people, and being lifted up with their vanities, have utterly fallen away from God, and followed the works and wickednesses of the heathen. These kind of men, therefore, are reckoned among strangers to the gospel. Others of these began to be doubtful in their minds, despairing, by reason of their wicked doings, ever to attain unto salvation; others, being thus made doubtful, did moreover stir up dissensions. To these, therefore, and to those who by reason of their doings, are become doubtful, there is still hope of return; but they must repent quickly, that their place may be in the tower. But they that repent not, but continue still in their pleasures, are nigh unto death.

X. "As for those who gave in their rods green, excepting their tops, which only were dry, and had clefts; these were always good, and faithful, and upright before God: nevertheless they sinned a little, by reason of their empty pleasures and trifling thoughts which they had within themselves. Wherefore many of them, when they heard my words, repented forthwith, and began to dwell in the tower. Nevertheless, some grew doubtful, and others to their doubtful minds added dissensions. To these, therefore, there is still hope of return, because they were always good; but they shall hardly be moved. As for those, lastly, who gave in their rods

dry, their tops only excepted, which alone were green: they are such as have believed, indeed, in God, but have lived in wickedness; yet without departing from God, having always willingly borne the name of the Lord, and readily received into their houses the servants of God. Wherefore hearing these things, they returned, and without delay repented, and lived in all righteousness. And some of them suffered death; others readily underwent many trials, being mindful of their evil-doings."

XI. And when he had ended his explications of all the rods, he said unto me, "Go, and say unto all men, that they repent, and they shall live unto God: because the Lord being moved with great clemency hath sent me to preach repentance unto all, even unto those who, by reason of their evil-doings, deserve not to attain unto salvation. But the Lord will be patient, and keep the invitation that was made by His Son." I said unto him, "Sir, I hope that all, when they shall hear these things, will repent. For I trust that every one, acknowledging his crimes, and taking up the fear of the Lord, will return unto repentance." He said unto me, "Whosoever shall repent with all their hearts, and cleanse themselves from all the evils that I have before mentioned, and not add any thing more to their sins, shall receive from the Lord the cure of their former iniquities, if they shall not make any doubt of these commands, and shall live unto God. But they that shall continue to add to their transgressions, and shall still converse with the lusts of this present world, shall condemn themselves unto death. But do thou walk in these commands, and thou shalt live unto God: and whosoever shall walk in these, and exercise them rightly, shall live unto God." And having showed me all these things, he said, "I will show thee the rest in a few days."

The Ninth Similitude.

The greatest mysteries of the militant and triumphant church which is to be built.

I. After I had written the commands and similitudes of the shepherd, the angel of repentance, he came to me and said to me, "I will show thee all those things which the

spirit spake with thee under the figure of the church. For that spirit is the Son of God: and because thou wert weak in body it was not declared unto thee by the angel until thou wert strengthened by the spirit, and increased in force, that thou mightest also see the angel. For then, indeed, the building of the tower was very well and gloriously shown unto thee by the church; nevertheless thou sawest all things shown unto thee as it were by a virgin. But now thou art enlightened by the angel, but yet by the same spirit. But thou must consider all things diligently; for therefore am I sent into thine house by that venerable messenger, that when thou shalt have seen all things powerfully, thou mayst not be afraid as before." And he led me to the height of a mountain of Arcadia, and we sat upon its top. And he showed me a great plain, and about it twelve mountains in different figures. The first was black as soot; the second was smooth without herbs; the third was full of thorns and thistles; the fourth had herbs half dried, of which the upper part was green, but that next the root was dry; and some of the herbs, when the sun grew hot, were dry; the fifth mountain was very rugged, but yet had green herbs; the sixth mountain was full of clefts, some lesser and some greater, and in those clefts grew grass, not flourishing, but which seemed to be withering; the seventh mountain had delightful pasture, and was wholly fruitful; and all kinds of cattle, and of the birds of heaven fed upon it; and the more they fed of it the better did the grass grow; the eighth mountain was full of fountains, and from those fountains were watered all kinds of the creatures of God; the ninth mountain had no water at all, but was wholly destitute of it, and nourished deadly serpents, and destructive to men; the tenth mountain was full of tall trees and altogether shady, and under the shade of them lay cattle resting and chewing the cud; the eleventh mountain was full of the thickest trees, and those trees seemed to be loaded with several sorts of fruits, that whosoever saw them could not choose but desire to eat of their fruit; the twelfth mountain was altogether white, and of a most pleasant aspect; and itself gave a most excellent beauty to itself.

II. In the middle of the plain he showed me a huge white rock, which rose out of the plain; and the rock was higher than those mountains, and was square, so that it seemed

capable of supporting the whole world. It looked to me to be old, yet had it a new gate, which seemed to have been newly hewn out in it. Now that gate was bright beyond the sun itself; insomuch that I greatly admired at its light. About that gate stood twelve virgins; of which four, that stood at the corners of the gate, seemed to me to be the chiefest, although the rest also were of worth; and they stood in the four parts of the gate. It added also to the grace of those virgins, that they stood in pairs, clothed with linen garments, and decently girded, their right arms being at liberty, as if they were about to lift up some burthen; for so they were adorned, and were exceeding cheerful and ready. When I saw this, I wondered with myself to see such great and noble things. And again I admired upon the account of those virgins, that they were so handsome and delicate; and stood with such firmness and constancy, as if they would carry the whole heaven. And as I was thinking thus within myself, the shepherd said unto me, "What thinkest thou within thyself, and are disquieted, and fillest thyself with care? Do not seem to consider, as if thou wert wise, what thou dost not understand, but pray unto the Lord that thou mayst have ability to understand it: what is to come thou canst not understand, but thou seest that which is before thee. Be not, therefore, disquieted at those things which thou canst not see; but get the understanding of those which thou seest. Forbear to be curious; and I will show thee all things that I ought to declare unto thee: but first consider what yet remains."

III. And when he had said this unto me, I looked up, and behold I saw six tall and venerable men coming; their countenances were all alike: and they called a certain multitude of men; and they who came at their call were also tall and stout. And those six commanded them to build a certain tower over that gate. And immediately there began to be a great noise of those men running here and there about the gate, who were come together to build the tower. But those virgins which stood about the gate perceived that the building of the tower was to be hastened by them. And they stretched out their hands, as if they were to receive somewhat from them to do. Then those six men commanded, that they should lift up stones out of a certain deep place, and

prepare them for the building of the tower. And there were lifted up ten white stones, square, and not cut round. Then those six men called the virgins to them, and commanded them to carry all the stones that were to be put into the building; and having carried them through the gate, to deliver them to those that were about to build that tower. Immediately the virgins began, all of them together, to lift up those stones that were before taken out of the deep.

IV. And they also who stood about the gate did carry stones in such a manner, that those stones which seemed to be the strongest were laid at the corners, the rest were put into the sides: and thus they carried all the stones, and, bringing them through the gate, delivered them to the builders, as they had been commanded; who receiving them at their hands, built with them. But this building was made upon that great rock, and over the gate; and by these the whole tower was supported. But the building of the ten stones filled the whole gate, which began to be made for the foundation of that tower. After those ten stones, did five and twenty others rise up out of the deep; and these were placed in the building of the same tower, being lifted up by those virgins, as the others had been before. After these, did five and thirty others rise up; and these were also, in like manner, fitted into the same work. Then forty other stones were brought up; and all these were added unto the building of that tower. So there began to be four ranks in the foundation of that tower; and the stones ceased to rise out of the deep; and they also which built rested a little. Again, those six men commanded the multitude, that they should bring stones out of those twelve mountains to the building of the same tower. So they cut out of all the mountains stones of divers colours, and brought them, and gave them to the virgins; which when they had received, they carried them, and delivered them into the building of the tower: in which when they were built, they became white, and different from what they were before; for they were all alike, and did change their former colours. And some were reached up by the men themselves, which, when they came into the building, continued such as they were put in. These neither became white, nor different from what they were before; because they were not carried by the virgins through the gate. Wherefore these

stones were disagreeable in the building; which when those six men perceived, they commanded them to be removed, and put again in the place from which they were brought. And they said to those who brought those stones, "Do not ye reach up to us any stones for this building, but lay them down by the tower, that these virgins may carry them and reach them to us. For unless they shall be carried by these virgins through this gate, they cannot change their colours; therefore do not labour in vain."

V. So the building that day was done, howbeit the tower was not finished; for it was afterwards to be built: therefore now also there was some delay made of it. And these six men commanded those that built to depart, and, as it were, to rest for some time; but they ordered those virgins that they should not depart from the tower. Now they seemed to me to be left for the guarding of it. When all were departed, I said unto that shepherd, "Sir, why is not the building of the tower finished?" "Because it cannot," said he, "be finished until its Lord comes and approves of the building; that if he shall find any stones in it that are not good, they may be changed; for this tower is built according to his will." "Sir," said I, "I would know what the building of this tower signifies; as also, I would be informed concerning this rock and this gate, and concerning the mountains and the virgins, and the stones that did rise out of the deep, and were not cut, but put into the building just as they came forth; and why the ten stones were first laid in the foundation; then the twenty-five; then thirty-five; then forty? Also concerning those stones that were put into the building, and again taken out, and carried back into their place? Fulfil, I pray, the desire of my soul as to all these things, and manifest all unto me." And he said unto me, "If thou shalt not be dull, thou shalt know all, and shalt see all the other things that are about to happen in this tower; and shalt understand diligently all these similitudes." And after a few days, we came into the same place where we had sat before; and he said unto me, "Let us go unto the tower; for the Lord of it will come and examine it." So we came thither, and found none but those virgins there. And he asked them whether the Lord of that tower was come thither? And they replied that he would be there presently, to examine the building.

VI. After a very little while I saw a great multitude of men coming, and in the middle of them a man so tall, that he surpassed the tower in height. About him were those six who before commanded in the building, and all the rest of those who had built that tower, and many others of great dignity: and the virgins that kept the tower ran to meet him, and kissed him, and began to walk near unto him. But he examined the building with so much care that he handled every stone, and struck every one with a rod which he held in his hand: of which some, being so struck, turned black as soot; others were rough; some looked as if they had cracks in them; others seemed maimed; some neither black nor white; some looked sharp, and agreed not with the other stones; and others were full of spots. These were the several kinds of those stones which were not found proper in the building: all which the Lord commanded to be taken out of the tower, and laid near it, and other stones to be brought, and put in their places. And they that built asked him from which of the mountains he would have stones brought to put in the place of those that were laid aside; but he forbade them to bring any from the mountains, and commanded that they should take them out of a certain field which was near: so they digged in that field, and found many bright square stones, and some also that were round. Howbeit, all that were found in that field were taken and carried through the gate by those virgins; and those of them that were square were fitted and put up into the places of those that were pulled out: but the round ones were not put into the building, because they were too hard, and it would have required too much time to cut them; but they were placed about the tower, as if they should hereafter be cut square, and put into the building; for they were very white.

VII. When he who was chief in dignity, and Lord of the whole tower, saw this, he called to him the shepherd that was with me, and gave him the stones that were rejected and laid about the tower, and said unto him, "Cleanse these stones with all care, and fit them into the building of the tower, that they may agree with the rest; but those that will not suit with the rest, cast away afar off from the tower." When he had thus commanded him, he departed with all those that came with him to the tower: but those virgins still stood about the tower to keep it. And I said unto that shepherd, "How can

these stones, seeing they have been rejected, return into the building of this tower?" He replied, "I will cut off the greatest part from these stones, and will add them to the building, and they will agree with the rest." And I said, "Sir, how will they be able to fill the same place, when they shall be so much cut away?" He answered, "They that shall be found too little shall be put into the middle of the building, and the greater shall be placed without, and keep them in." When he had said thus unto me, he added, "Let us go, and after three days we will return, and I will put these stones, being cleansed, into the tower. For all these that are about the tower must be cleansed, lest the master of the house chance to come upon the sudden, and find those which are about the tower unclean, and be so exasperated that these stones should never be put into the building of this tower, and I shall be looked upon to have been unmindful of my Master's commands." When therefore we came, after three days, to the tower, he said unto me, "Let us examine all these stones, and let us see which of them may go into the building." I answered, "Sir, let us see."

VIII. And first of all we began to consider those which had been black: for they were found just such as they were when they were pulled out of the tower: wherefore he commanded them to be removed from the tower, and put by themselves. Then he examined those which had been rough; and commanded many of those to be cut round, and to be fitted by the virgins into the building of the tower: so they took them, and fitted them into the middle of the building; and he commanded the rest to be laid by with the black ones, for they also were become black. Next he considered those which were full of cracks; and many of those also he ordered to be pared away, and so to be added to the rest of the building, by the same virgins; these were placed without, because they were found entire; but the residue, through the multitude of their cracks, could not be reformed, and therefore were cast away from the building of the tower. Then he considered those that had been maimed; many of these had cracks, and were become black; others had large clefts: these he commanded to be placed with those that were rejected; but the rest, being cleansed and reformed, he commanded to be put into the building. These, therefore, those virgins took

up, and fitted into the middle of the building, because they were but weak. After these, he examined those which were found half white and half black; and many of those were now black: these also he ordered to be laid among those that were cast away. The rest were found altogether white; those were taken up by the virgins and fitted into the same tower: and these were put in the outside, because they were found entire; that so they might keep in those that were placed in the middle, for nothing was cut off from them. Next he looked upon those which had been hard and sharp: but few of these were made use of, because they could not be cut, for they were found very hard: but the rest were formed, and fitted by the virgins into the middle of the building, because they were more weak. Then he considered those which had spots; of these a few were found black, and these were carried to their fellows. The rest were white and entire; and they were fitted by the virgins into the building, and placed in the outside, by reason of their strength.

IX. After this, he came to consider those stones which were white and round; and he said unto me, "What shall we do with these stones?" I answered, "Sir, I cannot tell." He replied, "Canst thou think of nothing then for these?" I answered, "Sir, I understand not this art; neither am I a stonecutter, nor can I tell any thing." And he said, "Seest thou not that they are very round? Now to make them square, I must cut off a great deal from them; howbeit it is necessary that some of these should go into the building of the tower." I answered, "If it be necessary, why do you perplex yourself, and not rather choose, if you have any choice among them, and fit them into the building?" Upon this he chose out the largest and brightest, and squared them; which when he had done the virgins took them up, and placed them in the outside of the building. And the rest that remained, were carried back into the same field from which they were taken: howbeit they were not cast away, "because," said he, "there is yet a little wanting to this tower, which is to be built; and perhaps the Lord will have these stones fitted into this building, because they are exceeding white." Then were there called twelve very stately women, clothed with a black garment, girded, and their shoulders free, and their hair loose. These seemed to me to be country-women. And the

shepherd commanded them to take up those stones which were cast out of the building, and carry them back to the mountains out of which they were taken. And they took them all up joyfully, and carried them back to their places from whence they had been taken. When not one stone remained about the tower, he said unto me, "Let us go about this tower, and see whether anything be wanting to it." We began, therefore, to go round about it; and when he saw that it was handsomely built, he began to be very glad: for it was so beautifully framed, that any one that had seen it must have been in love with the building: for it seemed to be all but one stone, nor did a joint any where appear; but it looked as if it had all been cut out of one rock.

X. And when I diligently considered what a tower it was, I was extremely pleased; and he said unto me, "Bring hither some lime and little shells, that I may fill up the spaces of those stones that were taken out of the building, and put in again; for all things about the tower must be made even." And I did as he commanded me, and brought them unto him; and he said unto me, "Be ready to help me, and this work will quickly be finished." He therefore filled up the spaces of those stones, and commanded the place about the tower to be cleansed. Then those virgins took besoms, and cleansed all the place around, and took away all the rubbish, and threw on water; which being done, the place became delightful, and the tower beauteous. Then he said unto me, "All is now clean: if the Lord should come to finish the tower, he will find nothing whereby to complain of us." When he had said this, he would have departed, but I laid hold on his bag, and began to entreat him, for the Lord's sake, that he would explain to me all things that he had shown me. He said unto me, "I have at present a little business; but I will suddenly explain all things unto thee. Tarry here for me till I come." I said unto him, "Sir, what shall I do here alone?" He answered, "Thou art not alone, seeing all these virgins are with thee." I said, "Sir, deliver me then unto them." Then he called them, and said unto them, "I commend this man unto you till I shall come." So I remained with those virgins. Now they were cheerful and courteous unto me; especially the four, which seemed to be the chiefest among them.

XI. Then those virgins said unto me, "That shepherd will not return hither to-day." I said unto them, "What then shall I do?" They answered, "Tarry for him till the evening, if perhaps he may come and speak with thee; but if not, yet thou shalt continue with us till he does come." I said unto them, "I will tarry for him till evening; but if he comes not by that time, I will go home and return hither again the next morning." They answered me, "Thou art delivered unto us; thou mayst not depart from us." I said, "Where shall I tarry?" They replied, "Thou shalt sleep with us as a brother, not as a husband; for thou art our brother, and we are ready from henceforth to dwell with thee; for thou art very dear to us." Howbeit I was ashamed to continue with them. But she that seemed to be the chiefest amongst them, embraced me, and began to kiss me. And the rest, when they saw that I was kissed by her, began also to kiss me as a brother; and led me about the tower, and played with me. Some of them also sung psalms, others made up the chorus with them. But I walked about the tower with them rejoicing silently, and seeming to myself, to be grown young again. When the evening came on, I would forthwith have gone home, but they withheld me, and suffered me not to depart. Wherefore I continued with them that night near the same tower. So they spread their linen garments upon the ground, and placed me in the middle; nor did they any thing else, only they prayed. I also prayed with them without ceasing, no less than they; who, when they saw me pray in that manner, rejoiced greatly; and I continued there with them till the next day. And when we had worshipped God, then the shepherd came and said unto them, "You have done no injury to this man?" They answered, "Ask him." I said unto him, "Sir, I have received a great deal of satisfaction in that I have remained with them." And he said unto me, "How didst thou sup?" I answered, "Sir, I feasted the whole night upon the words of the Lord." "They received thee well, then," said he. I said, "Sir, very well." He answered, "Wilt thou now learn what thou didst desire?" I replied, "Sir, I will; and, first, I pray thee that thou wouldst show me all things in the order that I asked them." He answered, "I will do all as thou wouldst have me, nor will I hide any thing from thee."

XII. "First of all, Sir," said I, "tell me what this rock and

this gate denote." "Hearken," said he; "this rock and this gate are the Son of God." I replied, "Sir, how can that be, seeing the rock is old, but the gate new?" "Hear," said he, "O foolish man! and understand. The Son of God is, indeed, more ancient than any creature; insomuch that He was in counsel with His father at the creation of all things. But the gate is, therefore, new, because He appeared in the last days, at the fulness of time; that they who shall attain unto salvation, may by it enter into the kingdom of God. You have seen," said he, "those stones which were carried through the gate, how they were placed in the building of the tower; but that those which were not carried through the gate, were sent away into their own places?" I answered, "Sir, I saw it." "Thus," said he, "no man shall enter into the kingdom of God, but He who shall take upon him the name of the Son of God. For if you would enter into any city, and that city should be encompassed with a wall, and had only one gate, could you enter into that city except by that gate?" I answered, "Sir, how could I do otherwise?" "As, therefore," said he, "there would be no other way of entering into that city but by its gate, so neither can any one enter into the kingdom of God, but only by the name of His Son, who is most dear unto Him." And he said unto me, "Didst thou see the multitude of those that built the tower?" "Sir," said I, "I saw it." He answered, "All those are the angels, venerable in their dignity. With these is the Lord encompassed as with a wall; but the gate is the Son of God, who is the only way of coming unto God. For no man shall go to God, but by His Son. Thou sawest also," said he, "the six men, and in the middle of them that venerable great man, who walked about the tower, and rejected the stones out of the tower?" "Sir," said I, "I saw them." He answered, "That tall man was the Son of God; and those six were His angels of most eminent dignity, which stand about Him on the right hand and on the left. Of these excellent angels none comes in unto God without Him." He added, "Whosoever, therefore, shall not take upon him His name, he shall not enter into the kingdom of God."

XIII. Then I said, "What is this tower?" "This," said he, "is the church." "And what, Sir, are these virgins?" He said unto me, "These are the holy spirits; for no man can enter into the kingdom of God, except these clothe him

with their garment. For it will avail thee nothing to take up the name of the Son of God, unless thou shalt also receive their garment from them. For these virgins are the powers of the Son of God. So shall a man in vain bear His name, unless he shall also be endued with His powers." And he said unto me, "Sawest thou those stones that were cast away? They bore, indeed, the name, but put not on their garment." I said, "Sir, what is their garment?" "Their very names," said he, "are their garment. Therefore whosoever beareth the name of the Son of God ought to bear their names also; for the Son of God also Himself beareth their names. As for those stones," continued he, "which being delivered by their hands, thou sawest remain in the building, they were clothed with their power; for which cause thou seest the whole tower of the same colour with the rock, and made, as it were, of one stone. So also those who have believed in God by His Son, have put on this spirit. Behold, there shall be one spirit, and one body, and one colour of their garments: and all they shall attain this who shall bear the names of these virgins." And I said, "Sir, why then were those stones cast away which were rejected: seeing they also were carried through the gate, and delivered by the hands of these virgins into the building of this tower?" "Seeing," said he, "thou takest care to inquire diligently into all things, hear also concerning those stones which were rejected. All these received the name of the Son of God, and with that the power of these virgins. Having therefore received these spirits, they were perfected and brought into the number of the servants of God; and they began to be one body, and to have one garment; for they were endued with the same righteousness which they alike exercised. But after that they beheld those women which thou sawest clothed with a black garment, with their shoulders at liberty and their hair loose, they fixed their desires upon them, being tempted with their beauty; and were clothed with their power, and cast off the clothing of the virgins; therefore were they cast off from the house of God, and delivered to those women. But they that were not corrupted with their beauty, remained in the house of God. This," said he, "is the signification of those stones which were rejected."

XIV. And I said, "Sir, what if any of these men shall repent, and cast away their desire of those women, and be con-

verted, and return to these virgins, and put on again their virtue ; shall they not enter into the house of God ?" "They shall enter," said he, "if they shall lay aside all the works of those women, and shall resume the power of these virgins, and shall walk in their works. And for this cause there is a stop in the building, that if they shall repent, they may be added to the building of this tower ; but if they shall not repent, that others may be built in their places, and so they may be utterly cast away." For all these things I gave thanks unto the Lord, that being moved with mercy towards all those upon whom His name is called, He sent to us the angel of repentance, to preside over us who have sinned against Him ; and that He has refreshed our spirits, which were almost gone, and who had no hope of salvation, but are now refreshed to the renewal of life. Then I said, "Show me now, Sir, why this tower is not built upon the ground, but upon a rock, and upon the gate ?" He replied, "Thou art foolish, and without understanding, therefore thou askest this." And I said, "Sir, I must needs ask all things of you, because I understand nothing at all. For all your answers are great and excellent, and which a man can hardly understand." "Hear," said he ; "The name of the Son of God is great, and without bounds, and the whole world is supported by it." "If, therefore," said I, "every creature of God be sustained by His Son, why should He not support those also who have been invited by Him, and who carry His name and walk in His commandments ?" "Seest thou not," said he, "that He does support them, who with all their heart bear His name ? He therefore is their foundation, and gladly supports those who do not deny His name, but willingly bear it."

XV. And I said, "Sir, tell me the names of these virgins, and of those women that were clothed with the black garment." "Hear," said he, "the names of those virgins who are the more powerful, and stand at the corners of the gate. These are their names : the first is called Faith ; the second, Continence ; the third, Power ; the fourth, Patience ; the rest, which stand beneath these, are Simplicity, Innocence, Chastity, Cheerfulness, Truth, Understanding, Concord, Charity. Whosoever therefore bear these names, and the name of the Son of God, shall enter into the kingdom of God. Hear now," said he, "the names of those women who were clothed with the black garment. Of these, four are the principal : the first

is Perfidiousness ; the second, Incontinence ; the third, Infidelity ; the fourth, Pleasure. And the rest which follow are called thus : Sadness, Malice, Lust, Anger, Lying, Foolishness, Pride, and Hatred. The servant of God, which carries these spirits, shall see indeed the kingdom of God, but he shall not enter into it." "But, Sir, what are those stones which were taken out of the deep, and fitted into the building?" "The ten," said he, "which were placed at the foundation, are the first age ; the following five-and-twenty, the second, of righteous men ; the next thirty-five, are the prophets and ministers of the Lord ; and the forty, are the apostles and doctors of the preaching of the Son of God." And I said, "Sir, why did the virgins put even those stones into the building, after they were carried through the gate?" And he said, "Because these first carried those spirits, and they departed not one from the other, neither the men from the spirits, nor the spirits from the men ; but the spirits were joined to those men even to the day of their death ; who if they had not had these spirits with them, they could not have been useful to the building of this tower."

XVI. And I said, "Sir, show me this farther." He answered, "What dost thou ask?" "Why did these stones come out of the deep, and were placed into the building of this tower, seeing that they long ago carried those holy spirits?" "It was necessary," said he, "for them to ascend by water, that they might be at rest. For they could not otherwise enter into the kingdom of God, but by laying aside the mortality of their former life. They therefore, being dead, were nevertheless sealed with the seal of the Son of God, and so entered into the kingdom of God. For before a man receives the name of the Son of God, he is ordained unto death ; but when he receives that seal, he is freed from death, and assigned unto life. Now that seal is the water of baptism, into which men go down under the obligation unto death, but come up appointed unto life. Wherefore to those also was this seal preached ; and they made use of it, that they might enter into the kingdom of God." And I said, "Why then, Sir, did these forty stones also ascend with them out of the deep, having already received that seal?" He answered, "Because these apostles and teachers, who preached the name of the Son of God, dying after they had received His faith and power,

preached to them who were dead before; and they gave this seal to them. They went down, therefore, into the water with them, and again came up. But these went down whilst they were alive, and came up again alive; whereas those, who were before dead, went down dead, but came up alive. Through these, therefore, they received life, and knew the Son of God; for which cause they came up with them, and were fit to come into the building of the tower; and were not cut, but put in entire; because they died in righteousness, and in great purity; only this seal was wanting to them. Thus you have the explication of these things."

XVII. I answered, "Sir, tell me now what concerns those mountains, why they are so different; some of one form, and some of another." "Hear!" said he; "these twelve mountains which thou seest are twelve nations, which make up the whole world. Wherefore the Son of God is preached to them, by those whom He sent unto them." "But why," said I, "are they different, and every one of a figure?" He replied, "Hearken! Those twelve nations which possess the whole world, are twelve people; and as thou hast beheld these mountains different, so are they. I will, therefore, open to thee the meaning and actions of every mountain." "But first, Sir," said I, "show me this: seeing these mountains are so different, how have they agreed into the building of this tower, and been brought to one colour; and are no less bright than those which came out of the deep?" "Because," replied he, "all the nations which are under heaven have heard and believed in the same one name of the Son of God, by whom they are called. Wherefore, having received His seal, they have all been made partakers of the same understanding and knowledge; and their faith and charity have been the same; and they have carried the spirits of these virgins together with His name. And therefore the building of this tower appeared to be of the same colour, and did shine like the brightness of the sun. But after they had thus agreed in one mind, there began to be one body of them all: howbeit some of them polluted themselves, and were cast off from the kind of the righteous, and again returned to their former state, and became even worse than they were before."

XVIII. "How," said I, "Sir, were they worse who knew the Lord?" He answered, "If he who knows not the Lord

liveth wickedly, the punishment of his wickedness attends him. But he who has known the Lord ought to abstain altogether from all wickedness, and more and more to be the servant of righteousness. And does not he then seem to thee to sin more who ought to follow goodness, if he shall prefer the part of sin, than he who offends without knowing the power of God? Wherefore these are indeed ordained unto death; but they who have known the Lord, and have seen His wonderful works, if they shall live wickedly, they shall be doubly punished, and shall die for ever. As therefore thou hast seen, that after the stones were cast out of the tower, which had been rejected, they were delivered to wicked and cruel spirits; and thou beheldest the tower so cleansed, as if it had all been made of one stone; so the Church of God, when it shall be purified (the wicked and counterfeits, the mischievous and doubtful, and all that have behaved themselves wickedly in it, and committed divers kinds of sin, being cast out), shall become one body; and there shall be one understanding, one opinion, one faith, and the same charity; and then shall the Son of God rejoice among them, and shall receive His people with a pure will." And I said, "Sir, all these things are great and honourable; but now show unto me the effect and force of every mountain; that every soul which trusteth in the Lord, when it shall hear these things, may honour His great, and wonderful, and holy name!" "Hear," said he, "the variety of these mountains, that is, of the twelve nations:—

XIX. "They who have believed of the first mountain, which is black, are those who have revolted from the faith, and spoken wicked things against the Lord, and betrayed the servants of God. These are condemned to death; there is no repentance for them; and therefore they are black, because their kind is wicked. Of the second mountain, which was smooth, are the hypocrites, who have believed, and the teachers of naughtiness; and these are next to the foregoing, which have not in them the fruit of righteousness. For as their mountain is barren, and without fruit, so also such kind of men have, indeed, the name of Christians, but are empty of faith; nor is there any fruit of the truth in them. Nevertheless there is room left to them for repentance, if they shall suddenly pursue it; but if they shall delay, they also shall be

partakers of death with the foregoing kind." I said, "Sir, why is there room left to those for repentance, and not to the foregoing kind, seeing their sins are well nigh the same?" "There is, therefore," said he, "to these a return unto life, by repentance, because they have not blasphemed against their Lord, nor betrayed the servants of God; but by their desire of gain have deceived men, leading them according to the lusts of sinners; wherefore they shall suffer for this thing. Howbeit there is still left them room for repentance, because they have not spoken any thing wickedly against their Lord.

XX. "They who are of the third mountain, which had thorns and brambles, are those who believed, but were some of them rich, others taken up with many affairs: the brambles are their riches; the thorns, those affairs in which they were engaged. Now they who are entangled in much business, and in diversity of affairs, join not themselves to the servants of God, but wander, being called away by those affairs with which they are choked; and so they which are rich, with difficulty yield themselves to the conversation of the servants of God; fearing lest any thing should be asked of them. These therefore shall hardly enter into the kingdom of God. For as men walk with difficulty barefoot over thorns, even so these kind of men shall scarcely enter into the kingdom of God. Nevertheless there is afforded to all these a return unto repentance; if so be they shall quickly return to it; that because in their former days they have neglected to work, in the time that is to come they may do some good. If therefore, having repented, they shall do the works of righteousness, they shall live; but if they shall continue in their evil courses, they shall be delivered to those women that will take away their life.

XXI. "As for the fourth mountain, which had many herbs, the upper part of which is green, but the roots dry, and some of which being touched with the heat of the sun, are withered; it denotes the doubtful, who have believed, and some others who carry the Lord in their tongues, but have Him not in their heart: therefore their grass is dry, and without root; because they live only in words, but their works are dead. These therefore are neither dead nor living, and withal are doubtful. For the doubtful are neither green nor dry: that is, neither dead nor alive. For as the herbs dry away at the

sight of the sun, so the doubtful, as soon as they hear of persecution, and fear inconveniences, return to their idols, and again serve them, and are ashamed to bear the name of their Lord. This kind of men then is neither dead nor alive; nevertheless these also may live, if they shall presently repent: but if not, they shall be delivered to those women, who shall take away their life.

XXII. "As concerning the fifth mountain, that is craggy, and yet has green grass; they are of this kind who have believed, and are faithful indeed, but believe with difficulty; and are bold, and self-conceited; that would be thought to know all things, but really know nothing. Wherefore, by reason of this confidence knowledge is departed from them; and a rash presumption is entered into them. But they carry themselves high, and as prudent men; and though they are fools, yet would seem to be teachers. Now, by reason of this folly, many of them, whilst they magnify themselves, are become vain and empty. For boldness and vain confidence is a very evil spirit. Wherefore many of these are cast away; but others, acknowledging their error, have repented, and submitted themselves to those who are knowing: and to all the rest of this kind there is repentance allowed; forasmuch as they were not so much wicked as foolish and void of understanding. If these, therefore, shall repent, they shall live unto God; but if not, they shall dwell with those women, who shall exercise their wickedness upon them.

XXIII. "For what concerns the sixth mountain, having greater and lesser clefts, they are such as have believed; but those in which were lesser clefts are they who have had controversies among themselves, and by reason of their quarrels languish in the faith: nevertheless many of these have repented, and so will the rest when they shall hear my commands; for their controversies are but small, and they will easily return unto repentance. But those who have the greater clefts, will be as stiff stones, mindful of grudges and offences, and full of anger among themselves. These, therefore, are cast from the tower, and refused to be put into its building; for this kind of men shall hardly live. Our God and Lord, who ruleth over all things, and has power over all His creatures, will not remember our offences, but is easily appeased by those who confess their sins; but man, being languid,

mortal, infirm, and full of sins, perseveres in his anger against man; as if it were in his power to save or to destroy him. But I, as the angel who am set over your repentance, admonish you, that whosoever among you has any such purpose, he should lay it aside, and return unto repentance, and the Lord will heal your former sins, if you shall purge yourselves from this evil spirit; but if ye shall not do it, ye shall be delivered to Him unto death.

XXIV. "As for the seventh mountain, in which the grass was green and flourishing, and the whole mountain fruitful, and all kind of cattle fed upon the grass of it, and the more the grass was eaten, so much the more it flourished; they are such as believed, and were always good and upright, and without any differences among themselves, but still rejoiced in the servants of God, having put on the spirit of these virgins, and been always forward to show mercy to all men, readily giving to all men of their labours, without upbraiding, and without deliberation. Wherefore the Lord, seeing their simplicity and innocence, has increased them in the works of their hands, and given them grace in all their works. But I, who am the angel appointed over your repentance, exhort you, that as many as are of this kind would continue in the same purpose, that your seed may not be rooted out for ever. For the Lord hath tried you, and written you into our number; and all your seed shall dwell with the Son of God; for ye are all of his spirit.

XXV. "As concerning the eighth mountain, in which were a great many springs, by which every kind of all the creatures of God was watered; they are such as have believed the apostles which the Lord sent into the world to preach; and some of them, being teachers, have preached and taught purely and sincerely, and have not in the least yielded to any evil desires, but have constantly walked in righteousness and truth. These, therefore, have their conversation among the angels.

XXVI. "Again; as for what concerns the ninth mountain, which is desert, and full of serpents, they are such as have believed, but had many stains; these are such ministers as discharge their ministry amiss, ravishing away the goods of the widows and fatherless, and serve themselves, not others, out of those things which they have received. These, if they

continue in this covetousness, have delivered themselves unto death; nor shall there be any hope of life for them. But if they shall be converted, and shall discharge their ministry sincerely, they may live. As for those which were found rough, they are such as have denied the name of the Lord, and not returned again to the Lord, but have become savage and wild, not applying themselves to the servants of God; but being separated from them, have for a little carefulness lost their lives. For as a vine that is forsaken in a hedge, and never dressed, perishes and is choked by the weeds, and in time becomes wild, and ceases to be useful to its Lord, so this kind of men, despairing of themselves, and being soured, have begun to be unprofitable to their Lord. Howbeit to these there is, after all, repentance allowed, if they shall not be found from their hearts to have denied Christ: but if any of these shall be found to have denied Him from his heart, I cannot tell whether such a one can attain unto life. I say, therefore, that if any one have denied, he should in these days return unto repentance; for it cannot be that any one who now denies the Lord can afterwards attain unto salvation: nevertheless, repentance is proposed unto them who have formerly denied. But he who will repent, must hasten on his repentance, before the building of this tower is finished; otherwise he shall be delivered by those women unto death. But they that are maimed, are the deceitful; and those who mix with one another, these are the serpents that ye saw mingled in that mountain. For as the poison of serpents is deadly unto men, so the words of such persons infect and destroy men. They are, therefore, maimed in their faith, by reason of that kind of life which they lead. Howbeit some of them, having repented, have been saved; and so shall others of the same kind be also saved, if they shall repent; but if not, they shall die by those women whose power and force they possess.

XXVII. "For what concerns the tenth mountain, in which were the trees covering the cattle; they are such as have believed; and some of them been bishops, that is, governors of the churches: others are such stones as have not feignedly, but with a cheerful mind, entertained the servants of God. Then, such as have been set over inferior ministries, and have protected the poor and the widows, and have always kept a

chaste conversation; therefore, they also are protected by the Lord. Whosoever shall do on this wise, are honoured with the Lord, and their place is among the angels, if they shall continue to obey the Lord even unto the end.

XXVIII. "As to the eleventh mountain, in which were trees loaded with several sorts of fruit; they are such as have believed, and suffered death for the name of the Lord, and have endured with a ready mind, and have given up their lives with all their hearts." And I said, "Why then, Sir, have all these fruit indeed, but yet some fairer than others?" "Hearken!" said he; "whosoever have suffered for the name of the Lord are esteemed honourable by the Lord; and all their offences are blotted out, because they have suffered death for the name of the Son of God. Hear now why their fruits are different, and some of them excel others. They who, being brought before magistrates, and being asked, denied not the Lord, but suffered with a ready mind; these are more honourable with the Lord. The fruits, therefore, that are the most fair are these. But they who were fearful and doubtful, and have deliberated with themselves whether they should confess or deny Christ, and yet have suffered, their fruits are smaller, because that this thought came into their hearts. For it is a wicked and evil thought for a servant to deliberate whether he should deny his master. Take heed, therefore, ye who have such thoughts, that this mind continue not in you, and ye die unto God. But ye who suffer death for His name's sake ought to honour the Lord that He has esteemed you worthy to bear His name, and that you should be delivered from all your sins. And why, therefore, do you not rather esteem yourselves happy? Yea, think verily, that if any one among you suffer, he performs a great work. For the Lord giveth you life, and ye understand it not. For your offences did oppress you; and if you had not suffered for His name's sake, ye had now been dead unto the Lord. Wherefore I speak this unto you who deliberate whether ye should confess or deny Him:—Confess that ye have the Lord for your God, lest at any time, denying Him, ye be delivered over into bonds. For if all nations punish their servants which deny their masters, what think you that the Lord will do unto you, who has the power of all things? Remove, therefore, out of your hearts these doubts, that ye may live for ever unto God.

XXIX. "As for the twelfth mountain, which was white; they are such as have believed like sincere children, into whose thoughts there never came any malice; nor have they ever known what sin was, but have always continued in their integrity. Wherefore this kind of men shall, without all doubt, inherit the kindom of God; because they have never, in any thing, defiled the commandments of God, but have continued with sincerity in the same condition all the days of their life. Whosoever, therefore," said he, "shall continue as children without malice, shall be more honourable than all those of whom I have yet spoken; for all such children are honoured by the Lord, and esteemed the first of all. Happy, therefore, are ye who shall remove all malice from you, and put on innocence; because ye shall first see the Lord." And after he had thus ended his explication of all the mountains, I said unto him, "Sir, show me now also what concerns the stones that were brought out of the plain, and put into the tower in the room of those that were rejected; as also concerning those round stones which were added into the building of the tower; and also of those who still continued round."

XXX. "Hear now," says he, "concerning those stones which were brought out of the plain into the building of the tower, and placed in the room of those that were rejected; they are the roots of that white mountain. Wherefore, because those who have believed of that mountain were very innocent, the Lord of this tower commanded that they which were of the roots of this mountain should be placed into the building; for He knew that if they were put into this building they would continue bright, nor would any of them any more be made black. But if He had added in this manner from the rest of the mountains, He would almost have needed again to visit this tower and to cleanse it. Now all these white stones are the young men who have believed, or shall believe; for they are all of the same kind. Happy is this kind, because it is innocent. Hear now, also, concerning those round and bright stones: all these are of this white mountain; but they are therefore found round, because their riches have a little darkened them from the truth, and dazzled their eyes: howbeit they have never departed from the Lord, nor has any wicked word proceeded out of their mouths, but all

righteousness, and virtue, and truth. When, therefore, the Lord saw their mind, and that they might adorn the truth, He commanded that they should continue good, and that their riches should be pared away: for He would not have them taken wholly away, to the end they might do some good with that which was left, and live unto God; because they also are of a good kind. Therefore was there a little cut off from them, and so they were put into the building of this tower.

XXXI. "As for the rest, which continued still round, and were not found fit for the building of this tower, because they have not yet received the seal; they were carried back to their place, because they were found very round. But this present world must be cut away from them, and the vanities of their riches; and then they will be fit for the kingdom of God. For they must enter into the kingdom of God, because God has blessed this innocent kind. Of this kind, therefore, none shall fall away; for though any of them being tempted by the devil should offend, he shall soon return to his Lord God. I, the angel of repentance, esteem you happy, whosoever are innocent as little children, because your portion is good and honourable with the Lord: and I say unto all you who have received this seal, Keep simplicity, and remember not the offences which are committed against you, nor continue in malice, or in bitterness, through the memory of offences, but become one spirit, and provide remedies for these evil rents, and remove them from you, that the Lord of the sheep may rejoice at it; for He will rejoice, if He shall find all whole. But if any of these sheep shall be found scattered away, woe shall be to the shepherds; but and if the shepherds themselves shall be scattered, what will they answer to the Lord of the sheepfold? Will they say that they were troubled by the sheep? But they shall not be believed. For it is an incredible thing that the shepherd should suffer by His flock; and he shall be the more punished for his lie. Now I am the shepherd; and I especially must give an account of you.

XXXII. "Wherefore take care of yourselves, whilst the tower is yet building. The Lord dwells in those that love peace; for peace is beloved: but He is far off from the contentious, and those who are full of malice. Wherefore restore unto Him the spirit entire, as ye received it. For if thou shalt give unto a fuller a garment new and whole, thou wilt

expect to receive it whole again : if therefore the fuller shall restore it unto thee torn, wouldst thou receive it? Wouldst thou not presently be angry, and reproach him, saying, I gave my garment to thee whole, why hast thou rent it, and made it useless to me? Now it is of no use to me, by reason of the rent which thou hast made in it. Wouldst thou not say all this to a fuller, for the rent which he made in thy garment? If, therefore, thou wouldst be concerned for thy garment, and complain that thou hadst not received it whole, what thinkest thou that the Lord will do, who gave His spirit to thee entire, and thou hast rendered Him altogether unprofitable, so that he can be of no use unto his Lord? For being corrupted by thee, he is no longer profitable to Him. Will not therefore, the Lord do the same concerning His spirit, by reason of thy deed?" "Undoubtedly," said I, "He will do the same to all those whom He shall find to continue in the remembrance of injuries." "Tread not then under foot," said he, "His mercy; but rather honour Him, because He is so patient with respect to your offences, and not like one of you; but repent, for that will be profitable for you.

XXXIII. "All these things which are above written, I the shepherd, the angel of repentance, have shown and spoken to the servants of God. If therefore ye shall believe, and hearken to these words, and shall walk in them, and shall correct your ways, ye shall live. But if ye shall continue in malice, and in the remembrance of injuries, no such sinners shall live unto God. All these things which were to be spoken by me, I have thus delivered unto you." Then the shepherd said unto me, "Hast thou asked all things of me?" I answered, "Sir, I have." "Why then," said he, "hast thou not asked concerning the spaces of these stones that were put in the building, that I may explain that also unto thee?" I answered, "Sir, I forgot it." "Hear then," said he, "concerning those also. They are those who have now heard these commands, and have repented with all their hearts: and when the Lord saw that their repentance was good and pure, and that they should continue in it, He commanded their former sins to be blotted out. For these spaces were their sins; and they are, therefore, made even that they might not appear."

The Tenth Similitude.

Of repentance and alms-deeds.

I. After that I had written this book, the angel which had delivered me to that shepherd, came into the house where I was, and sat upon the bed, and that shepherd stood at his right hand. Then he called me, and said unto me, "I delivered thee and thy house to this shepherd, that thou mightest be protected by him." I said, "Yes, Lord." "If therefore," said he, "thou wilt be protected from all vexations, and from all cruelty, and have success in every good word and work, and have all virtue and righteousness, walk in those commands which he has given thee, and thou shalt have dominion over all sin. For if thou keepest those commands, all the lust and pleasure of this present world shall be subject to thee; and success shall follow thee in every good undertaking. Take, therefore, his gravity and modesty towards thee, and say unto all, that he is in great honour and renown with God, and is a prince of great authority, and powerful in his office. To him only is the power of repentance committed throughout the whole world. Does he not seem to thee to be of great authority? But ye despise his goodness, and the modesty which he shows towards you."

II. I said unto him, "Sir, ask him since the time that he came into my house whether I have done any thing disorderly, or have offended him in any thing?" "I know," said he, "that thou hast done nothing disorderly, neither wilt thou hereafter do any such thing; and therefore I speak these things with thee, that thou mayst persevere; for he has given me a good account concerning thee. But thou shalt speak these things to others, that they who either have repented, or shall repent, may be like-minded with thee; and he may give me as good an account of them also; and I may do the same unto the Lord." I answered, "Sir, I declare to all men the wonderful works of God; and I hope that all who love them, and have before sinned, when they shall hear these things, will repent, and recover life." "Continue therefore," said he, "in this ministry, and fulfil it. And whosoever shall do according to the commands of this shepherd, he shall live; and shall have great honour both here and with the Lord. But they that

shall not keep his commands flee from their life, and are adversaries unto it. And they that follow not his commands shall deliver themselves unto death, and shall be every one guilty of his own blood. But I say unto thee, keep these commandments, and thou shalt find a cure for all thy sins.

III. "Moreover, I have sent these virgins to dwell with thee; for I have seen that they are very kind to thee. Thou shalt, therefore, have them for thy helpers, that thou mayst the better keep the commands which he has given thee; for these commands cannot be kept without these virgins. And I see how they are willing to be with thee; and I will also command them, that they shall not at all depart from thy house. Only do thou purify thy house; for they will readily dwell in a clean house. For they are clean, and chaste, and industrious; and all of them have grace with the Lord. If, therefore, thou shalt have thy house pure, they will abide with thee; but if it shall be never so little polluted, they will immediately depart from thy house; for these virgins cannot endure any manner of pollution." I said unto him, "Sir, I hope that I shall so please them that they shall always delight to dwell in my house, and as he to whom you have committed me makes no complaint of me, so neither shall they complain." Then he said to that shepherd, "I see that the servant of God will live and keep these commandments, and place these virgins in a pure habitation." When he had said this, he delivered me again to that shepherd, and called the virgins, and said unto them, "Forasmuch as I see that ye will readily dwell in this man's house, I commend him and his house to you, that ye may not at all depart from his house." And they willingly heard these words.

IV. Then he said unto me, "Go on manfully in thy ministry; declare to all men the great things of God, and thou shalt find grace in this ministry. And whosoever shall walk in these commands shall live, and be happy in his life: but he that shall neglect them shall not live, and shall be unhappy in his life. Say unto all that whosoever can do well cease not to exercise themselves in good works, for it is profitable unto them. For I would that all men should be delivered from the inconveniences they lie under. For he that wants, and suffers inconveniences in his daily life, is in great torment and necessity. Whosoever therefore delivers such a soul from necessity gets great

joy unto himself. For he that is grieved with such inconveniences is equally tormented as if he were in chains; and many upon the account of such calamities, being not able to bear them, have chosen even to destroy themselves. He therefore that knows the calamity of such a man, and does not free him from it, commits a great sin, and is guilty of his blood. Wherefore exercise yourselves in good works, as many as have received ability from the Lord, lest, whilst ye delay to do them, the building of the tower be finished; because for your sakes the building is stopped. Except, therefore, ye shall make haste to do well, the tower shall be finished, and ye shall be shut out of it." And after he had thus spoken with me, he rose up from the bed, and departed, taking the shepherd and virgins with him. Howbeit he said unto me that he would send back the shepherd and virgins unto my house. Amen.

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